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THE
TRIVENI
QUARTERLY

Vol. XV

EDITOR:
K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO, M.L.A.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR:
K. SAMPATHGIRI RAO, M.A.

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'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature, and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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To CONTRIBUTORS: Contributions are invited on all aspects of the modern Indian awakening specially in so far as they relate to the cultural life of India. English translations from outstanding writers in the different Indian languages are specially welcome. Contributions, however, should not exceed 3,000 words ordinarily.

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..... *he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!*

--THE SONG CELESTIAL

'The Triple Stream'

By THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

THE GREAT PENA NCE

Gandhiji's fast for 21 days, from February 10th to March 2nd was a period of intense anxiety to the millions in India, and many outside. A whole nation went into prayer as the news from Poona became gloomier. There were many who undertook sympathetic fasts for a day or more: everywhere one could sense the deep concern over Gandhiji's priceless life. A whole nation was stirred to its depths: and the suspense was so trying that for the moment all feelings were repressed, and mass prayers and devotional singing gave great solace. When the crisis was over, and Gandhiji crossed over it as though by a miracle, great was the relief and the occasion of Gandhiji's breaking the fast on March 3rd was celebrated all over the land with an outburst of rejoicing that finds no parallel in living memory. Men and women who had never concerned themselves in public affairs—the very children at school—felt the glow of joy and thanksgiving that lighted up the country when it was known that Gandhiji had survived the ordeal.

Dr. B. C. Roy, who had been permitted by the Government, at Gandhiji's request, to attend on him, presiding over a meeting of the staff and students of the Calcutta University at Calcutta on March 7th, said:

"The whole fast was in the nature of a religious ceremony Mahatmajī started his fast with prayers and he ended his fast with prayers. And throughout the period he had kept himself in tune with the Infinite. Day in and day out while he was being nursed by doctors and nurses, he was always in a state of communion with the Higher Power. I can assure you, and through you all the country, that the whole period of his fast, the way he fought death, the manner in which from hour to hour he waited patiently for the successful termination of the fast were something of a privilege to witness. It was like watching a Yagna, like watching a devotee at his prayers, and after these prayers were over I saw him shut his eyes, leaning against the doors, I dare say, to feel the presence of the Almighty nearer his heart, and then he broke his fast".

During the whole of that fateful period, all controversies were hushed, all political and other conflicts were forgotten. Even the issue of Swaraj and National Government receded into the back-ground, and

the inmost thoughts of every one dwelt on the value to India and the world of the Mahatma who lay hovering between life and death in the Aga Khan's Palace. It revealed in a striking way the sense of values to which the Indian people hold fast, and which makes the most intimate appeal to their peculiar genius: the world was worth living in because of the presence of great and good souls—all else is as nought.

THE 'TALKIE' AND THE STAGE

The Talkies in India have almost displaced the stage play as a form of popular entertainment in India—not only in the towns and cities but even in the country-side. Producers and distributors of films, with greater resources, publicity, and ability to cater to the humblest purse, have made it almost impossible for Dramatic Companies, even with talented actors, to survive the unequal competition. Many dramatic troupes have broken up, and the erstwhile actors and actresses have sought their fortunes in films, or have sunk into obscurity. It is a repetition of the well-known results of machine-made goods and hand-made articles competing in the same market. But that the Stage may yet come to its own, and that it has certain inherent virtues in it making it a superior expression of the histrionic art, is the hope of some optimists and devoted lovers of the Drama. Among them is Sri. P. Sambandam, the *doyen* of the amateur Tamil stage, who has some interesting observations to make on the subject:

He writes:

" Sooner or later the glamour of the new Talkies must fade to a certain extent, and it will find its level. The great point in favour of the old stage performances is that the audience see before them their favourite actors and actresses in flesh and blood. There is not the personal touch (in a Talkie), or personal magnetism, as it has been called, which counts so much with an appreciative audience: this personal touch works in two ways: so far as the audience is concerned, they would any day feel happier by seeing and hearing personally their favourites on the stage; so far as the actors and actresses are concerned they always feel the thrill of an appreciative audience while they are acting on the stage, and this makes them come out consciously or unconsciously with their best The Stage has one other advantage over the Screen which the latter cannot hope to beat. It is this: whenever you see a cinema drama there is no temptation for you to see it again and again: it will be the same thing repeated, without the slightest iota of change in every respect. Not so a dramatic performance. The same drama acted by the same cast may present to you endless variety of good acting. A great actor or actress will present the same incident in a number of different artistic ways and you will be never tired of it....." (*Hindu*—28—3—1943.)

'THE TRIPLE STREAM'

The main line of argument in the above is unexceptionable and may be readily conceded. It is, of course, possible for cinema 'fans' to argue that even if the actors in a Talkie do not get the thrill of acting before an appreciative audience—a loss which is compensated in other substantial ways—the frequenters of the cinema have trained themselves to get magnetised by the shadows flitting on the 'silver screen'. It is after all a matter of habit—like people getting accustomed to tinned milk or canned fruits and preferring these even when the real thing is available. Often, the fresh milk or fruit available is possibly poorer in quality than the preserved substitute: even so, the stage play may often turn out to be a poor and even miserable affair compared with the rich entertainment provided by 'stars' of varying magnitude who can be seen in the pictures for a paltry payment. Further, the contention that since a cinema story gets repeated mechanically, there is no incentive to see it more than once or twice is not borne out by actual facts. There are many people who are not tired of going again and again to see the same picture, just as there are some people who are not tired of playing the same gramophone record to hear a favourite song over and over again.

But when all this is said for the cinema-enthusiasts' view-point, the fact remains that acting on the stage by actors and actresses who know their business is a type of creative art altogether in a different category. It is not certainly to be compared with the 'drilling' and posing, with or without emotion, and certainly without spontaneity, waiting for the benedictory 'OKAY' of the Directors, and their entourage of 'engineering' experts, for being 'shot' and canned once and for ever in celluloid films. This refers only to the travail through which, actors have to pass. So far, however, as the audience are concerned, the illusion created is fairly satisfying, as the finished product contains elements which normal stage plays do not provide—carefully planned visual effects which make every bit a 'picture'. But the human touch and joy of ever-new creative effort on the part of artists when face to face with an appreciative audience makes all the difference in every one of the arts, be it painting as against photography, sculpture as against machine-mouldings, music as against the gramophone record and the stage-play as against the talkie.

But the 'hand-made' article, here as elsewhere, needs 'protection' if it is not to be swamped out of the market. The protection is in the shape of patronage by the art-loving public through amateur societies, or through subsidies provided by public bodies like Municipalities etc., which in other countries have their own theatres and picture galleries.

Good art is bound to triumph in the long run. One is glad, therefore, to come across a news item like the following:

"Gujerat, unlike other provinces, has not allowed the talkies to supersede the stage. It has distinctive traditions of the theatrical art which are retained by the existing dramatic companies. A few plays have recorded a score of over one hundred nights in face of the stiff competition with the Talkie. One of them is "Lava-Kusa" It has to its credit a continuous run of nearly 200 nights in a town like Bhavnagar which has a population of about 1,20,000. The Prabhat Kalamandal which has put it on board was founded by Haribhai Bhat.....himself a playwright, director and actor. He plays in it the leading role of Rama"

(Kapil Rai Mehta in the "*Bombay Chronicle*")

THE SHADOW PLAY

Writing in the *Modern Review* for February 1943, Sri Harindranath Chattopadhyaya gives an account of Sri. Uday Shankar's shadow play, 'Rama Lila', produced at the Art Centre at Almora, which seems to have proved extremely popular and drawn thousands from the neighbouring areas to witness it. From the description given, extracts from which will be found elsewhere in this Issue under "Gleanings", one can see that it was an elaborate affair, with a stage of great dimensions, the silhouette figures moving on the screen being probably of more than human size. Sri. Uday Shankar's well-known capacity for organisation and his supreme artistry have been pressed into service to produce a type of drama of great artistic possibilities, and it adds one more achievement to the many that are to his credit as a gifted exponent of Indian Dance.

The shadow-play, as such, is, however, no new invention for it is an age-old form of entertainment in our country.. In South Indian Provinces, at any rate, there are marionette plays—consisting of dolls made of wood or leather or other material, manipulated by strings by expert hands from behind, and throwing their animated shadows on a white screen, while the story is declaimed in words and songs with musical accompaniments—an effective exposition, if rather crude and monotonous by modern standards. The manipulators of strings from behind perform their task with an uncanny dexterity. That this is an ancient form of entertainment is evidenced by the term *Sutradhara* (literally, holder of the strings)—a person who introduces a play in the classical Indian stage and is the player and stage manager of the entire show. But this form of entertainment is disappearing, and the dexterous experts who manipulated the marionettes are becoming extinct. Here is a rich field for exploration and reconstruction for those who have an enthusiasm for artistic revival in our country as an

'THE TRIPLE STREAM'

important part of real rural reconstruction. Shorn of its crudities, which need not be considered an essential ingredient of true indigenous or national art, the marionette play may yet thrive in the country and provide entertainment to thousands even against the stiff competition of touring talkies which have invaded the rural areas and are revolutionising the unsophisticated tastes of the villagers in our land.

SOUTH INDIAN ART IN NORTH INDIA

Sri. Ram Gopal of Bangalore, the talented dancer, shares with Sri. Uday Shankar and Sri. Menaka Devi the honours of building up a reputation for Indian Dance in foreign countries in recent times. Young, enthusiastic, gifted with a supple and flawless frame, and a highly artistic temperament, Sri. Ram Gopal can go far indeed in his mission for the revival of the Art of Dance in India. He maintains an Institution at Bangalore, where the South Indian forms like Kathakali and Bharata Natya occupy a prominent place.

Sri. Ram Gopal and his troupe, consisting of South Indian musicians playing the orchestra, recently toured North Indian cities and have helped to familiarise audiences there with the South Indian forms of dance and music. Writing in the *Social Welfare* of 26th March 1943, "Wajid Ali Shah" under the title, "February ends in Lucknow" says:

"Ram Gopal visited Lucknow for the first time and showed us the glory of the Bharatiya Nritta. Ram Gopal has a perfect body, and his technique which he has acquired from the greatest living exponent of the Bharatiya Nritta is flawless. It is more than mastery, it is the ease that comes from the triumph over technique. He disabused us, the Northern Indians, of the notion that foot-work is our monopoly. But we saw his Tillana Adi Tala and we felt humble. His skill in the movement of eye-brows and the neck were of a very high order. I do not think I have seen any dancer who steps back and retreats from the stage-front so artistically as Ram Gopal does. As in music, the *avaroha* is the test of artistry, so also in dance the step-back makes or unmakes a dancer. And Ram Gopal glides and halts, halts and glides, and yet the impression is one of continuity and integrity. He knows the art of concluding, because he dances one whole idea... His troupe gave us Kathakali and a few folk items. Individually each performer was good, but somehow we felt that the performance in its entirety was not up to the mark in production. There Uday Shankar's troupe have set a high standard. Musically, one was expecting an unfavourable reaction to the Karnataki compositions but the audience liked them. There is a slip of a girl, Saroj, in Ram Gopal's troupe, who should go much further."

It may be added, by way of explanation, that Ram Gopal has had his training in dancing under Sri. Minakshisundaram and Sri. Ellappa

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Mudaliar; and Sri. Kunju Kurup, the Kathakali master, is helping the troupe in person...Saroj is a young dancer executing Bharata Natya dances, such as are familiar all over South India.

While North Indian films have familiarised us in South India with North Indian music and even types of North Indian dance, though they may not be always of the classical variety, North Indian audiences are on the whole strangers to the delicacies of South Indian music and dance. The occasional visits of South Indian musicians to the north often end in performances given to South Indians' resident in the big cities. Any enterprise such as Ram Gopal and his troupe have successfully undertaken to present South Indian art in North India so as to break down the barriers that have grown in the way of mutual appreciation of art and music, is a matter for gratification.

A NEW YEAR

With this issue, TRIVENI enters upon its fifteenth year, and it is a matter of joy to acknowledge the kindness, the indulgence and the generous support accorded by its patrons. When Sri Ramakotiswara Rao shifted to Bangalore last year, I wrote a note: "Welcome to TRIVENI." Little did I imagine at the time that soon I should have to shoulder the honour and burden of conducting the journal in the absence in jail of Sri. Ramakotiswara Rao, who was able to edit only two issues last year. It is owing to the active moral and material support of a few friends that TRIVENI has survived. "To continue the journal or stop it" was the problem that again presented itself rather formidably after the four issues of last year were published. But without yielding to the voice of despair it has been decided to carry on TRIVENI. I am deeply grateful to the friends and respected elders whose kindness and encouragement have heartened me to take the decision. But the Journal needs more widespread support if the question is not to come up again.

Going through the old files of TRIVENI one is struck with the frequent appearance of Editorial notes of a personal character written by Sri. Ramakotiswara Rao, appealing for more support and setting forth his trials and tribulations. I was most reluctant, therefore, to add one more to the list of such notes. But I owe it to the friends, who would not like me to mention their names, to take our kind readers into confidence and tell them that all is not yet well with its business side. I beg the indulgence and forgiveness of readers for referring to these chronic troubles of the Journal in an editorial note, and trust I shall never have to revert to the subject again.

Abhimanyu

BY MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR

(Rendered by the author from his Kannada Poem)

The news that Abhimanyu had been slain
Spread all along the battle-front and filled
Pandava hearts with grief. A messenger
Sped to the camp behind the fighting lines
Where ladies of the royal households stayed
And, unwillingly and in halting words,
Conveyed it to them. Oh, alack the day!
Who can describe, or in what words, the grief
That over-powered wife and mother? Who
can bear to think of that resounding wail
And outcry. Sashirekha, wedded wife
Of the young prince, now widowed, in ecstasy
Of sorrow, dropped to earth. Subhadra, mother,
Crying a cry that seemed to break the welkin
Rolled on the ground. "My son, my darling child,
And have I lost you? and how shall I live
Without you? Why, oh, why did you insist
And go to battle? Could you not have proved
That you were such a hero without dying?
Would not the world have praised you? Was there not
A million of men to fight instead?
Oh son, why did you from my womb take birth
If it were just to die so young and cast
This helpless woman on a sea of sorrow?
Why shall I, now that you have left me, bear
This life on earth? Is Krishna uncle to you?
Father, the great Arjuna? and valorous
Bheema, your father's elder brother own?
And are they younger uncles, Nakula
And Sahadeva, of whose prowess all
The world speaks in such praise? When you were little
All of them took you in their hands and kissed you
And as you grew played with you. How could they,

Without revulsion, find it in their hearts
To let you go to battle, there to die,
And they themselves, arms folded, stay behind ?
If these could thus abandon you what bond
Of blood or kin or love is there on which
Men may rely ? My boy, my child, those valiant
And mighty men who led our hordes to battle,
Could not a single one of them break through
The murderous formation that closed round
A boy so young ? How could they leave their prince
Unhelped, to die ?—a young one who could live,
If left to live, of days at least some twenty
Thousand, and let him die and live themselves ?
What valour strange was this that dreaded death
Or was it but a wisdom years had brought ?
Yudhishtira, renowned for still refusing
To bear what is unseemly, did he too
Consent to let you go ? Did he not say :
'The boy is far too young.' 'I'd rather not
Send out my handsome nephew.' 'Tis too early.'
Why did not Krishna think of me and save
His sister's son ? The dream of Arjuna,
That you should in your fame for valour be
His peer, has now become a dream indeed.
Alas, what fruit is this of what great crime
Of mine which blackened some past life ? Woe ! Woe !'

As thus the mother cried aloud and moaned
In grief unbearable, to soothe her came
Her elder brother whom one half the world
Revered as god descended to the earth.
At sight of him, grief in the mother's heart
Grew four-fold and again she wailed and cried
And fell upon his feet and begged of him
To give her back her son. "You surely knew
He was too young, you knew I loved him so.
Why did you leave him to be slain ? You might
Forget what else so ever but not that he
Was your own sister's son. How could you leave him
Thus to be slain, a mere boy as if

ABHIMANYU

He were no more than just a stranger to you?"
Krishna took Subhadra up and looked
With eyes, from which the light had gone, upon her—
Yet in those eyes was pity infinite—
And said in accents calm yet sad: "My sister,
A man is sent to battle-field because
He is a hero; not for that he is
Related thus or thus to them who lead.
You surely know this just as well as I.
Those who would win the good should risk such loss
In life on earth. We have to bear this grief:
Both you and I. What if he died so young?
So young he won a fame that comes to few
In greater length of life. Your son died great.
What is the thing achieved if one should live
For years on top of years without a name
Like piling grass in bundle upon bundle
Until a stack is made to which at last
A spark of fire is set to burn it down
On the cremation ground? Of such a life
Each day is worth no more than wisp of straw,
Empty and of no value. What does man
Gain by collecting days innumerable
To throw into the jaws of death? Of them
Not one remains and all is wiped away.
No life is such a life. Oh sister mine,
Know you not that your son by fame for valour
Fills the four quarters of the world? Are you not
Proud that you bore the hero whom all men
Praise as so worthy? What can a mother have
More than the privilege that her son grow great?
Your son, oh sister, put the last fine touch
With his puissance on the noble picture
Limned by the lives of all the Pandavas,
And like the crescent moon that shines atop
The mount of Kailas and completes it, he,
In fame that even to their fame adds beauty,
Stands in eternal glory. Think of it
And learn to withstand grief."

While thus he spoke
Subhadra, stormed by gusts of memory
Of what her son had said or how he looked
Or stood, was tossed as if her heart would break,
Her pain soared in a peak without control,
And suddenly she fainted and fell down
On Krishna's feet unconscious. Krishna sat
Upon the ground there where his sister fell
And took her head on to his lap as in
The days of old when he was small and she
Was smaller still. Alas, he thought, that this,
My sister, should have come on grief so hard
To endure. She cannot bear this pain and be
Sound in her mind unless the root of it,
The thought of self undue that makes excess
Alike of joy and sorrow, be removed.
No words of mine by play upon the ear
Can bring peace in her being. So he led
Her soul along a path in realms of dream
And thus she dreamt.

She was again a young
And growing girl and wandered fancy-free
In the gardens round Dwaraka, her joy of being
Tinting each moment of the live-long day
Golden with hope of what should come. Spring came
Bringing soft sprout and tender leaf and flower
To tree and creeper and eke to maiden hearts ;
And parrots flew across blue bits of sky
Garlanding them ; and pairs of turtle cooed
In love ; and keen the cuckoo raised its note.
And that same Spring brought Arjuna to her,
Hero disguised in garb of ascetics,
Like Winter's moon in mist. All easily
He won her love and threw himself and her
Upon a sea of joy and stretched his arms
And murmured, "Come my love" : and she, too happy
Could she but do his wish, gave up herself
And closed in love embrace and floated out
In depths of happiness immeasurable,

ABHIMANYU

Eyes shut. Some moments passed and then she wished
To look upon her lover and oped her eyes
And he who held her was not Arjuna
But Abhimanyu. Startled, she released
Herself from that embrace and forthwith lost
the thought of what had occurred, and again
Hied on another dream. And now she was
Proud mother of her newly-born son
Named Abhimanyu by his uncles all,
In hope and pride that he would make their line
Illustrious for prowess. She held him close
And looked upon his lips and eyes and curls
With eyes that knew not how to cease and whelmed him
With kisses and again she pressed him hard
Against her breast and with that joy full filled
Her heart and mind and soul; and that she might
Be undisturbed in it she closed her eyes
And drank it in her being. When she had
Sunk deep in that deep happiness she would
look on the child again and oped her eyes.
It seemed to her then that he who lay so little
Within her arms against her breast was not
Child Abhimanyu but Arjuna's self
And thus the wonder child herseemed to speak :
"My beloved, know you not that for the war
Of Bharata we need two Arjunas,
One Arjuna to live and one to die ?
And I whom you have borne am one, the other
Is he whom Kunti bore." Again Subhadra
Started, and lost the thread of thought again,
And on again she wandered in her dream.
Along a path, she felt, not known to her
She walked upon a time and from afar
Descried three figures coming up to her.
She looked and saw that they were Arjuna,
Krishna and Abhimanyu. Eagerly
She walked to them and all three looked on her
But did not know her. Wondering she moved
Close to them thinking ; Well, how mad I was
To think my son was dead. He's hale and strong.

When with this thought she tried to touch the son
The figure changed and seemed like Arjuna
And what had borne the shape of Arjuna
Took Abhimanyu's shape. Subhadra tried
To touch this Abhimanyu and he changed
And wore the form of Krishna and the one
That had been Krishna in that moment seemed
To be her Abhimanyu. So the mother
Tried oft to touch her son and foun'd that form
To change and change and change, each of the three
That stood before her taking on the shape
Of Abhimanyu, Arjuna or Krishna
And still eluding grasp; till, tired of trying
And puzzled deep at heart, she wished to speak
To Krishna asking what this thing could mean
And fell upon his feet and cried : "Help brother."

Then ceased her roaming in the realms of dream
And she awoke to find him tending her
His eyes so full of pity. What matters it
If when we call on God we are awake
Or in a dream ? He hears either cry
And stretches out His arms of help and saves.
Subhadra, calmer now, lay with her head,
A child again, on her great brother's lap;
And he, in tone of deep concern yet calm,
Said : "Sister, you were troubled in your dream."
Her strength depleted by overwhelming grief,
Subhadra could not part her lips in speech
And lying motionless just where she was
She looked on Krishna and allowed her mind
To dwell upon him. Then she in her heart
Saw that in truth this being whom she knew
As brother Krishna was all other selves;
And in great sadness said : "Krishna, oh brother,
What was the need for all this ? When a girl
You gave me dolls and changed them as you willed
And I a girl cared not; is later life
Of no more moment than is childhood's sport
And is it right to give a son and take him

ABHIMANYU

At will as if a doll?" Her words were few
And weak like drops of a remainder shower
That might follow a storm. Krishna was moved
Deeply as if to weep himself but withstood
The poignancy of his grief. As if
The tears suppressed had turned to dark wry smile,
He smiled a cheerless smile in agony
And said: "Oh sister, if the mass of men
Who live in ignorance said what you say
I should not wonder. But when it is you
That speak so or when it is Arjuna
That turns his face from the embattled front,
From pity for his kinsmen and his friends,
It is then I know not what to think of it.
You care for two out of this host. Your husband
Cares for another two. And he, my brother
Bala, two others, and thus all for whom
I care, for others still, and still those others
For still two others. If all these should live
Because I love them or those whom I love
Would have them live, will any one be left
To fight for righteousness, the general good?
There could be no such thing as this great war
And unstrung bows would clutter up the ground
And good and bad live as each wills and cares
And never finger raised to put down evil.
I love you sister; I love Arjuna;
I love the other Pandavas; I loved . . .
Your son, my nephew; and believe me, dear,
The sons of queen Gandhari are to me
All worthy pity; and each single one
Of these long serried ranks is dear to me.
Whom shall I keep alive, whom leave to die?
And if I shall not bear the thought that any
Should die at all where will righteousness stand?"
"Alas" Subhadra sighed and said: "My brother,
Whose is the fault and whom is it you kill?"
Krishna replied: "You know Subhadra how
The truth is. All this world is but a life;
Not many or a myriad lives. One life

Includes the life of all of us. And when,
In that one life, a limb errs there is pain
Over all the limbs, even those that not offend ;
And when for righteousness men have to fight
And at deep need, even the best of men
Should die for it. My sister, if a house
Should be on fire would we not pour on it,
To save it, all the water we can get ?
The water kept for drinking, aye, the little
In those small cups that we have used in worship
And consecrated, no less than that store,
For we would save the house ? The right should live
If living should be worthy ; and, that it may,
The nephew of the Generalissimo
May have to die as does the meanest soldier.
This age is running, sister, to its end.
The sense of right and wrong no longer lives
Within men's hearts, and low and evil thought
And impulse are parading brazenly,
Like dark malignant spirits of the night
Walking in light of day ; and doubt and wonder
If what is right is worthwhile have become
Common, and all the law of decent living
Is abrogated quite. We have to stem
The onward march of these battalions
Of darkness and, to do this, should give up
Some goodness from our lives, some conduct good,
Some lives that we would rather keep ; to vanquish
What is malignant and infernal, man
Should make a sacrifice of things that he
Holds dear and even sacred. This, our race,
Has laid up tons of evil and should now
Work out that evil by this suffering.
The debt needs must be paid. The better life
Will pay it quicker. Grieve not, sister mine,
That Abhimanyu died. Remember rather
That Arjuna is left. I saw the two
Fighting the mighty men opposed to them
And, sister, truly as I looked on them
I wondered if for doing doughty deeds

ABHIMANYU

In this great war, my brother Arjuna
Had taken on two bodies. For the two,
Father and son, did each the other excel.
You bore that son that Arjuna might live.
Believe me, Arjuna is truly he
The son you think you have lost. My nephew is
And has not ceased to be. He is in me
In whom are all the lives that ever were
And are and will be to the end of time."

So spoke the brother and the sister heard
The wisdom spoken in those accents sad
Yet calm, and felt the truth of them a little,
But could not quite accept, remembering
The son that had been and no longer was
Present to earthly eyes. Yet in her heart
She glimpsed that Krishna whom the gods worshipped
Was sole refuge in sorrow as in joy
For those who live, and that the son who died
Lived in him yet; and in this thought lay still
Upon that lap on which the universe
Plays while it lives and dying finds its peace.

Shelley and the Vedanta

BY DIWAN BAHADUR T. BHUJANGA RAO

Stopford Brooke describes the philosophy of Shelley as "idealistic pantheism". It resembles the *Vedanta* so much that a discussion of how Shelley arrived at his philosophy may be interesting. But it may at once be said that Shelley was not, like Emerson, for example, a student of Indian philosophy. Shelley's philosophy was merely a reaction from the Calvinistic theology that prevailed in his time. Stopford Brooke refers to that theology in one place in his writings as a "dreadful theology". Whether the description is fully justified or not, there can be no doubt that Shelley believed the theology to be dreadful. Shelley chose for attack three principal dogmas of the Calvinistic creed (as he understood it); and it is in reaction from those doctrines that he developed his own philosophy, (in so far as the intuitions of a poet may be described as his philosophy).

II

The first dogma attacked by Shelley was the doctrine of a "jealous", anthropomorphic deity, hurling thunderbolts from the skies and ordaining the "reprobation" of the greater part of mankind. Shelley revolted from the conception and described the Calvinistic God as a Moloch of vindictiveness :—

The avenging God,
Who, prototype of human misrule, sits
High in heaven's realm, upon a golden throne,
Even like an earthly king.

(Queen Mab)

The next dogma was the doctrine of an eternal hell. Shelley rejected it and pronounced the horrors of hell to be but figments of theological invention :—

There needeth not the hell that bigots frame
To punish those who err.

(Queen Mab)

The third dogma was the doctrine of Original Sin, the doctrine which, in the words of Stopford Brooke, "stains the child with evil from its birth and brings it into the world as the child of the devil". Shelley treated this doctrine with scorn and proclaimed that the soul was untainted with sin :—

Soul is not more polluted than the beams
Of heaven's pure orb ere round their rapid lines
The taint of earth-born atmosphères arise.

SHELLEY AND THE VEDANTA

III

In reaction from the conception of a "jealous", anthropomorphic Deity, sitting high in the heavens, Shelley conceived of God as the Eternal Love pervading and animating creation. In this he was not alone. The barren deism of the 18th century, and the revival of Calvinism in the early years of the 19th century, made other poets in England, such as Wordsworth, seek for God in Nature and in Man. Wordsworth spoke of his feeling

A sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

(Tintern Abbey Revisited)

Shelley felt this sense in an acuter way. He could acknowledge fraternity with the elemental Beings of Earth and Air and Ocean and proclaim that they participate equally with man in the Divine life.

Earth, Ocean, Air, beloved brotherhood!
If our great mother has imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety to feel
Your love and recompense the boon with mine,

*

*

*

withdraw

No portion of your wonted favour now.

(Alastor)

To Shelley, the whole world, with its trees and rivers and lakes and mountains, was a manifestation of the Divine Life and an attestation to the Divine Love:

The One Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear,

*

*

*

And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

(Adonais)

The Deity was, to Shelley, often the Spirit of Love with whom he could commune:

Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all
We can desire, O Love!

(Prince Athanase)

The Deity was also the Spirit of Beauty whom he addressed thus :

Spirit of Beauty, thou dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form.

(*Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*)

But though often the Deity to Shelley was impersonal, the personal aspect of God was not absolutely excluded. For Shelley could also write :

Day had awakened all things that be :—
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,
And the milkmaid's song, and the mower's scythe,

* * *

All rose to do the task He set to each
Who shaped us to His ends and not our own.

(*Boat on the Serchio*)

IV

In reaction from the Calvinistic doctrine of an eternal hell and of everlasting damnation for the greater portion of mankind, Shelley propounded the doctrine of what may be called Life-in-Death or Salvation-in-Death. Shelley was an ardent student of Plato. Plato not merely held that the world is a scene of misery and illusion but that, to use the words of Walter Peter, "for the soul to have come into a human body at all was the seed of disease in it, the beginning of its own proper death". Shelley imbibed these ideas and declared that human life was a dim, vast vale of tears and illusion :

This life
Of error and ignorance and strife
Where nothing is but all things seem
And we the shadows of a dream.

(*Sensitive Plant*)

Shelley at times soared into the highest flights of idealism and found the world to be an unsubstantial pageant and 'such stuff as dreams are made on' :

This whole
Of suns, and worlds and men and beasts and flowers,
* * *
Is but a vision : all that it inherits
Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles and dreams.

(*Hellas*)

But to Shelley the escape from this vale of misery was through Death :

Death is a gate of deariness and gloom
That leads to azure isles and beaming skies,
And happy regions of eternal hope

(*Queen Mab*)

SHELLEY AND THE VEDANTA

Shelley held that the period of man's stay in this world was a period when his heavenly radiance was dimmed by the vapours of mortal life but that the mystagogue of Death would transport man to his true realm :

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Till Death tramples it to fragments.

(*Adonais*)

It is unfortunate that Shelley did not live long enough to study Indian philosophy, with its teaching of the evolution of the ordinary human soul through a series of incarnations in this world and of the advanced soul through a series of stages in the other worlds. The Greeks, no doubt, often referred to the theory of re-incarnation, but they more or less played with that doctrine. Shelley, too, played with that theory as a fancy, as, for example, in his poem "*With a Guitar, to Jane*." But there is nothing to show that Shelley held the theory of re-incarnation seriously. The result has been that, while his theory of Salvation-in-Death may be true of the most perfect saints (called *Jeevanmuktas* in India), it is not easy to accept it as true of all mankind. Between the perfectibility of man and his actual perfection Shelley's idealism could see no distinction.

V

The last dogma of Calvinism attacked by Shelley was the dogma of Original Sin. This dogma took no account of the innate divinity in man. But, modifying so as to suit the requirements of pantheism the doctrine of Love expounded by Plato in the dialogues of the *Symposium* and *Pheodrus*, Shelley advanced the counter-doctrine of what may be called the divinity of man. He maintained that, far from being tainted with sin from the hour of its birth, the soul of man is a portion of the being of God, a spark from the Divine Fire :

An atom of the Eternal, whose own smile
Enfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen,
O'er the grey rocks, blue waves, and forests green.

(*Epipsychedion*)

Combining this belief with his doctrine of Life-in-Death, Shelley declared that after death the soul awakes to a consciousness of its native dignity and dwells in an everlasting union of love and bliss with the eternal God:

The pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same.

(*Adonais*)

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Shelley therefore asserted with jubilant enthusiasm that, disburdened of its corporeal frame, the soul of Keats was merged in the glory of the Divine :

He is made one with Nature. There is heard
His voice in all her music. *

* * * *

He is a presence to be felt and known.

In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself to where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own.

(Adonais)

Indeed, so strong was Shelley's faith in the high destiny of man to partake in the Being of God that he claimed that he himself would realise the consummation designed for all the world :

That sustaining Love
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of mortality.

(Adonais)

The *Adonais* was published in July 1821. The fire that Shelley referred to in the above lines took him to its abode in July 1822.

The Lotus of the Heart

BY BASUDHA CHAKRAVARTHI

(This is one of the most significant of the songs popularized by Bauls, a special community of devotees in Bengal)

The lotus of the heart goes on blossoming for ages :
unto it both you and I are tied and
there is nothing to be done about it.

The blooming of the lotus knows no end ;
the equality of the honey within
the lotus is of special excellence ;
so the greedy bee cannot leave it off.

So to it both you and I are tied and there is no escape.

A Historic Pageant of Suicide

BY A. SRINIVASA PAI

Part I —Prelude

Whether suicide is morally permissible is a question on which there is a wide divergence of opinion between the ancient and the modern world. So stern a moralist as Marcus Aurelius says in his famous "Meditations" that when a man is afflicted with misery which he feels is unbearable there is the door always open to him through which he can escape. And there are instances of famous Romans, Seneca, among them, who committed suicide (generally by opening a vein and getting into a hot bath—considered to be the least painful mode) to escape what they regarded as a worse fate at the hands of an enemy. No stigma attached to such suicides. In the modern world, generally speaking, suicide is condemned and a stigma attaches to such an act; especially so, among nations professing Christianity who regard suicide as immoral and a sin against the Almighty. In English law as well as under the Indian Penal Code attempt at suicide is a criminal offence and punishable as such. There are, however, exceptions in the Modern world, the most generally known being the Japanese custom of "Hara Kiri", self-disembowelment, to which not only no stigma attaches but which is considered as honourable. The famous general Nogi of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 observed "Hara-Kiri" on the death of the Mikado Mutsohito in 1912. The question whether when a man is suffering from an incurable disease, he cannot, in order to escape unnecessary pain and suffering, obtain the help of his medical advisers in putting a painless end to his existence has been exercising the minds of many thoughtful men in England in recent years. An Euthanasia Society with the famous English Surgeon Lord Moyaihan at its head was started in England, but inspite of precautions formulated for determining the conditions for resorting to Euthanasia they found they had no hopes of getting the British Parliament to pass a law in favour of Euthanasia. At or about this time a very pathetic case came before the English Courts. An English woman had a son (an only child) who, though a man of about thirty so far as his bodily growth went, was infantile in his mind and so required the constant care of his mother. The mother was one day pronounced to be suffering from a disease which required an urgent major operation which she might or might not survive. The woman was in great anguish. The thought harried her that after her death (and she did not expect or desire to survive the operation) the son

would be absolutely helpless and she could not expect any relation or friend to take adequate care of him. So, she decided on putting a painless end to the son's life and carried out her decision and then went to the Surgeon's table. Contrary to her expectation she survived the operation and was restored to health. She was then charged with the murder of her son and brought before the Court. She did not try to defend herself but with tears and sobs confessed what she had done. The Judge and Jury were affected and sought to satisfy the letter of the law and let her off with a light punishment.

Among the ancient Hindus suicide appears to have been allowed under certain circumstances without any stigma attaching thereto. The most ancient instance mentioned in Sanskrit literature is what is termed "prayopavesha" and occurs in the Ramayana. When Ramachandra found that his wife Sitadevi was missing and the extensive search, which he and his brother made, proved fruitless he happened to arrive in Sugriva's kingdom (near Hampi in the Bellary District) where he cultivated Sugriva's friendship. Sugriva ordered a number of his most distinguished followers Hanuman, Neela, Angada and others to go and discover where Sitadevi was and come and inform him. Now Sugriva's commands were terrible and *must* be obeyed. None so ordered dared come back and face him without carrying out the order; "Sugriva ajna" has thus become a by-word. So, Hanuman and others having made an extensive search without any result decided on "prayopavesha" lying down on a hill-side and fasting unto death rather than go back and face Sugriva's anger and punishment. Thus they laid themselves down and fasted for three days, when some tardy followers found a romantic cave entering which they discovered a dazzling habitation and one of the inmates told them with proofs that Sitadevi was in "Asokavana" in Lanka. The fasting followers then decided to make one more attempt before giving up their lives and happily succeeded in the attempt. That this most ancient tradition till lingers among Hindus is brought forcibly home to my mind by an instance within my own experience. Some 15 years ago, when I was residing in Mangalore, the ruler of Sangli sent his mahout to fetch a young elephant and its calf found and kept in custody in a forest in Coondapore Taluk. The mahout with his servants came to my house in Mangalore and after getting instructions and a letter from me proceeded to Coondapore. For no fault of his he appears to have lost these elephants. Some time thereafter I heard from an official of the Sangli State that the mahout had committed suicide a short distance from Sangli rather than meet his

A HISTORIC PAGEANT OF SUICIDE

sovereign without the elephants. Fasting unto death with mind fixed on contemplation of the Divine (technically termed 'Sallekha') appears to be regarded among the Jains as a religious mode of departing this life, especially towards the close of one's Natural Life. Tradition says that the far-famed Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta towards the end of his reign turned a monk and with a large number of followers proceeded to the south and ended his life by "Sallekha" near Sravana Belegola in the Mysore Province.

Besides the above-mentioned circumstances another not condemned by public opinion among ancient Hindus is incurable disease as indicated by the following account of a unique Historical event. Here we find the meeting place of ancient and modern thought regarding Euthanasia.

Part II—Pageant

One of the most famous among ancient Indian rulers was Vikramaditya of the dynasty of Chalukyas of Kalyan. Probably, his fame has not reached our students in schools and colleges who might know all about Ethelred the Unready and the Heptarchy in England but very little about ancient rulers of their mother-country. We cannot blame our students but must convict those whose duty it is to prescribe courses of study in schools and colleges of our country. It is, however, satisfactory to note that things are better now than they were three or four decades ago. Chalukya Vikramaditya ruled over a considerable portion of South India with his capital at Kalyan, the site of which is at a short distance to the north of Gulbarga in the Nizam's dominions. His was a long and glorious reign, from A.D. 1076 to 1126. He was a great warrior and his conquests embraced most of the kingdoms of the day from Nepal to Pandya: Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Magadha, Panchala, Malwa, Gurjar, Saurashtra, Chedi, Andhra, Kadamba, Hoysala, Kalachurya, etc. Conquests of Hindu rulers hardly ever meant annexation but only acknowledgment of suzerainty and payment of tribute. When Vikramaditya ascended the throne in 1076 he assumed the title of "Tribhuvana Malla" (Hero of the three worlds). He married Chandala-devi, daughter of King Vidyadhara of Karhat, famed as the most beautiful maiden of the day, at a "Swayamvara" where she chose him from amongst a large number of ruling princes who had gathered for the ceremony. Thus he was successful both in war and love. He was a great patron of learning and in his court flourished the famous Yajnavalkya, author of the legal work 'Mitakshara', which even at the present day governs personal law among Hindus in South India.

Another great writer and poet was Bilhana who has written a history of his patron in Sanskrit entitled 'Vikramanka Deva Charitam'. The account of this "Pageant of Suicide" is taken from this work. It relates to Vikramaditya's father Someshwara I who had the title of Ahava malla (Hero of war) and who ruled from A.D. 1040 to 1069.

By the time Someshwara had concluded his plans of war against the kingdom of Chola then ruled by Vira Rajendra he (Someshwara) had an attack of malignant fever. Inspite of the best efforts of Royal Physicians the fever did not abate but went on rising. The king's body felt like a live coal. To cool the body sandal paste and medicated oils were tried but to no avail. The fever did not yield to any remedy. Life became insupportable. Then Someshwara sent for his ministers and spoke to them as follows : -

"This life is like a bubble on the surface of water. It appears for a moment and is gone the next. I have no other refuge than Ishwara (the Almighty). I think that instead of rolling on this bed and dying here it is far better that I should lie on the lap of Mother Thungabhadra and give up this body while engaged in the contemplation of Shiva. Till now to the best of my ability, I have spent my days in the service of Srikanta. Hereafter, instead of dying somewhere or other it is proper, I think, that I should end my life in the sacred river."

Then accompanied by his wives, children, ministers, army and others he proceeded to Kuravetti (said to be a place in the district of Bellary) on the banks of the river Thungabhadra. By this time news spread in all the neighbouring villages that the king was going into 'Jala Samadhi'. From places far and near people began to arrive in crowds at Kuravetti. Long before sunrise on the day fixed for the king's departure from this world people began to go and occupy places on the banks of the river wherefrom the scene could be most conveniently witnessed.

Early in the morning of the day the king bathed and finished his usual religious duties. The faces of all around him were pale and sorrowful with the thought that very soon he would finally depart from them. Tears were ceaselessly flowing from the eyes of his wives and children and those amongst his ministers and servants who were dearest to him.

Seated in a palanquin and accompanied by the people of his palace, ministers and Brahmins, Someshwara arrived at the river. Undressing and discarding all unnecessary clothes and wrapping the upper part of his

A HISTORIC PAGEANT OF SUICIDE

body in a "Shalya" and supported by his ministers he descended into the river. Then with his own hands he distributed to his heart's content largesse to the poor, the learned and the virtuous. Afterwards contemplating 'Paramatma' (the Universal Soul) he proceeded further and further into the water. Tears began to flow from the eyes of the on-lookers. The sorrow of his queens was indescribable. The eyes of all were fixed on the face, the eyes and movements of the body of the king, who had descended into the water. When the water reached his neck he stood still and made 'Surya namaskara' (salutation to the Sun) with the utmost devotion. Then he shut his eyes and his lips were seen to move in prayer. Thereafter, opening his eyes he looked around at his subjects who had assembled on the river-banks and having saluted them all with folded hands, uttered the words "Hara-Hara-Mahadev" and stepped forward till the waters flowed over his head and he departed this life.

Though Someshwara sank and passed away, the minds of the people who had witnessed the scene with absorbed attention were thinking of nothing else for several days. And for several days people were talking of nothing else.

A Poem

BY K. K. KAUL

In the red-tinted west
 the sunset glows,
 like a red-hot iron bar.
On my lips
 however most strange...
 the mirage of a smile,
Yet
 mocking memories pursue
Love's wistful pilgrim.
And ever in my memory stir
 the after-savours of your kiss.

Modern Russian Humour

BY V. V. PRASAD

"*Russian Humour? Does it exist?*"

.....*Boris Mirsky (a Russian humorist)*

I

Most of us, some with the help of Hollywood, others without it, picture the Russian as a person with a singular lack of humour enveloped with gloom *a la* Dostoevsky. To us 'Russian' and 'humour' appear to be irreconcilable terms: he who speaks of Russian humour might as well speak of Muslim Hindus or Roman Catholic Protestants. And yet, there is a strong streak of the humorous lurking somewhere in the Slav soul.

"Russian gloom" has long been the favourite subject of discussions in literary societies throughout England and abroad for the past thirty years and more. We have connected, as literary critics do, Russian literature with Russian history in such a way that it would answer to the dictum: "Literature is a representation of life."

By what appears to be an unexplainable process (which I shall try to explain later) we forgot that literature is also, as Aristotle said long ago, a criticism of life. Much of Russia's humorous literature has been criticism, first of Tsarist Russia and afterwards of 'Bolshevik' Russia. In other words, the practical-minded Russians believed in the wisdom of the old Greek who said, in effect, that humour without satire was like 'Hamlet' without the Prince of Denmark.

It has been hinted at the outset that Hollywood derived immense pleasure from time 'un-memorial' by lampooning Bolshevik Russia. The culmination of the scurrilous attack took place in the popular show, "Ninotchka". They say "Don't pronounce it, see it!" but, unfortunately, only as an idea for an advertisement. The trade-mark of Russian mentality, Maurice Dekobra tells us, is expressed in the word "Nitchevo," pronounced "Skouchno." (I have not myself hazarded a guess as to how 'Ninotchka' must be pronounced because I would thereby prevent the reader from giving full play to his mind). Can any one without the highest sense of fun have such a spelling, and such a pronunciation? No, not even the English.

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'Ninotchka', the typical Russian woman "with her cheek bones a little prominent, her smile a little cruel, her sapphire eyes a little steely", and "her pearl-necklace a little false" (?), is represented as incapable of understanding even Pat-and-Mike jokes. A friend of mine, writing from Poona, says, "If you remember *Ninotchka* you will realize that women appreciate only slap-stick." I do not know whether he has misunderstood the film or whether, as is more probable, he has twisted the context to suit the exigencies of his letter; but that is not what Hollywood had at the back of their mind. They were thinking neither of women in general, nor Russian women in particular, but of Russians in general.

In "Clicking of Cuthbert" P. G. Wodehouse introduces a Russian novelist as the guest of the evening at a suburban Literary Society. They expect him to appreciate the local novelist who has been influenced from his childhood by the great tradition of the Russian gloom, but he ignores the young fellow; instead, he recognizes "Cootaboot Banks" (Cuthbert), the young golf-player, and after kissing him heartily on both his cheeks, in the Russian manner, proceeds to narrate a few golf anecdotes about himself—to the consternation of the other members who understand as little golf as Cuthbert understands literature. He speaks of the day when he was playing with Lenin and Trotsky and another, when somebody tried to shoot Lenin with a revolver. "You know, shooting Lenin with a revolver is our national game." And so on.

I do not suggest for a moment that Wodehouse had the theme of this article at the back of his mind when he wrote that story. Far from it. But if we wish to read into it our thesis, we can do so with surprising ease—proving incidentally that nothing could have been farther from the humorist's mind. The truth of this remark will be much better appreciated if we remember that after condemning the novelist Sovietski, and Nastikoff as worse than Sovietski, the Russian novelist proceeds to say, "Tolstoy and P. G. Wodehouse not bad. Not good, but not bad"—the implication that his own works are supreme being fairly obvious.

Let me quote to you from E. F. Bozman on "Translation: *Le Style c'est l'homme*":

Russia: No one can read Russian. That is why their books must be translated. The Russian language is very queer. It is very much like English in many ways, but it has not the jollity of A. E. Housman or George Gissing. Go, little translator, and render the big Russian books into your little-mother-tongue.

Bozman has in this passage given us another reason why we do not know of the existence of Russian humour, namely, the difficulty of the Russian language. It is probably true that it lacks the jollity of the English tongue, for most Russian humour, like much French poetry, is sad. A famous Russian poet after reading the humorist Gogol's story of the "Dead Souls" was reported to have exclaimed, "My God! Russia is indeed a sad country." Nikolai Gogol has often been compared to Charles Dickens without discredit to either, and may be called the father of Russian Humour. He is also the father of modern Russian Literature.

II

Before Gogol there was not much Russian fiction worth the name. As Dostojevsky said, "We are all descended from Gogol's story of the 'Cloak'". It appears to us quite comic when we come across modern Russian litterateurs proudly declaring that their humour has its traditions, (traditions which are less than a hundred and fifty years old). Russian literature, on account of its 'young-ness', (all Russian humour existing is modern) has not very many conventions to break. The 'young-ness' of Russia thus enables her to pursue more freely new lines of development in literature—as it has done in the realm of political and economic planning.

With the possible exception of Dostojevsky, that 'cruel genius,' every older Russian author has humorous stories to his credit. The explanation of this is not far to seek. The political and other turmoils through which Russia passed during the past few decades made it imperative for the Slav people to devise means of 'escape'. Humour, being one of the recognised shock-absorbers, was very much in demand—and it was forthcoming in accordance with the strictest laws of supply and demand.

Gogol has anticipated not only later Russian humorists, but even humorists of other nations. To mention just one example: In his "Letters of a Lap-Dog" he has incredibly foretold the coming of P. G. Wodehouse's "The Mixer"—to which we might add the sub-title, "The Diary of a Watch-Dog."

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Anton Tchekhov, with whose plays every student of world-literature is familiar, started as a writer of humorus stories. It has been said of this author of Russian "Heart-break houses" that "he makes us laugh whilst Gogol makes us cry." Mysterious are the ways of Russian writers!

The third Russian writer on a par with Tchekhov and Gogol is Gorki. The word 'Gorki' means 'bitter,' but sometimes Alexey Maximovich Pyeshkov ('Gorki' being the pen-name) is indeed sweet. On the whole his humour (as distinguished from his serious work) might be termed 'bitter-sweet,' not merely on account of a love for puns, but with a certain amount of respect for propriety. This passage from "Promtov's Marriage" is typical of him :

My wife did nothing but scold me for my friendship with the minor Canon, and did her utmost to draw me into her gang of literary people and humbugs. Every evening she received "the most serious and respectable people of the town," as she put it. She was right: they looked as serious as if they were hanged.

I was rather fond of reading myself in those days, only nothing I ever read bothered me in the least, and I don't see why it should have--

Evidently my readers and I are not with promtov. He proceeds :

But those people--I mean my wife and her worthy friend--got so terribly excited from reading a book that one might have imagined their hair was being pulled out. My idea is this: a book - well, what of it? A book's a book; if it's a good one, so much the better. All books are written for the same purpose. They all try to prove that what's good is good, and what's bad is bad.

There are three sections into which Russian literature of the past hundred and odd years has been divided: but we shall have no need to adhere to it. Of the five great Russian writers who are most popular in India—Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Tchekhov and Gorki—three are practitioners of the slippery art of humour. Dostoevsky is the gloom-master; and Tolstoy, the moral-master, has (as Bernard Shaw points out) the strongest satirical pen. "He does not write paragraphs about the absurdity of one man sitting as judge over another, on the fallibility of the human mind, on the theme of 'Judge not that ye be not judged.' He simply mentions that before occupying his judicial seat, the Judge went through a course of gymnastics in his private chamber." The first few pages of "Resurrection" show Tolstoy as a super-satirist.

III

When we come to the humorists of the period of the World War I, we find that they are mostly satirical. A man called Arkady Avertchenko has gathered around his review, "Satiricon", a band of the wittiest of Russian writers. He is pouring playful scorn and invective against Tsarist Russia, thus acting as the 'shining supplement of Public Laws.' His arrows of satire 'feathered with wit, and wielded with sense,' flew home to their mark. Result? They got seats in state-carriages; some as modern theatre-critics get cinema-tickets; and others for their journey to Siberia.

The understanding of Russian satire of this time generally requires a previous knowledge of Russian history and even that of the Russian language: but, sometimes, it can be appreciated without the political connotation in the same way as "Gulliver's Travels" is appreciated by children.

The late nineteenth-century writer, Mikhail Saltykov (*nom-de-plume* 'Shchedrin') is famous for his attacks on red-tapism which deserve to be much better known. His sketch entitled, "Two Generals and a Peasant" is typical of his satire:

Some years ago there lived in Petersburg two generals. Now these generals had grown old in the service of the government, having spent the whole of their lives in small civil offices, and, consequently, knew nothing else beyond the mere routine of their duties. Their entire vocabulary consisted of such words as 'I remain, sir, most respectfully yours.' In due time the generals retired on a pension, each hired a cook and they settled down in Redtape Avenue to a comfortable old age."

With the advent of the Bolshevik regime, the whips of "Satiricon" had to flee—on account of their outspoken criticism of the new regime. Thus we find many of the humorists leaving Moscow for Paris, London and other capitals. (Avertchenko died in Prague in the year 1924.) With the exception of Vlass Dorochevitch, who was killed in the thick of the Revolution, most Russian humorists left their homes.

The following is an incident narrated by Avertchenko, which speaks of the astonishment of the Russians when they heard that a trunk reached its destination properly. Incidentally, it helps to brush up our knowledge of Russian history :

"You're not going to tell me that 'he lost his trunk as well?'" ejaculated the sea-dog as if he had been shot.

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"Why, no, that's the miracle: in January, 1920, the trunk arrived safe and sound in Sebastopol! The whole country was topsy-turvy. The Petersburg-Sebastopol line was in the hands of marauders. To begin with, there was the Ukrainian hetman Skoropadski with his cossacks; then came Petlura's gangs who overthrew him and got into power; then the bandit Makho's rabble; after that there were the white volunteers; and, last of all, the new Bolsheviks; towns were being burned and were passing from hands to hands; railway stations were being burned and were being pillaged, every thing was being seized down to the smallest parcel; baskets and trunks emptied of their contents, were filled with stones—yet the minister's trunk continued its journey slowly but surely like an industrious ant, and, after peregrinating for a year and a half, ended by reaching its destination untouched, exactly as it had started—"

Don Aminado is considered to be the best Russian humorist outside Russia to-day. He writes paragraphs of two sentences or less. Here is an observation of his on the subject of "*Coups d'etat*":

When a *coup d'etat* fails it is called a revolt. But a revolt that is successful is called a *coup d'etat*.

The following, which will be equally topical, is from Aminado's "*A Few Words About America*":

The Americans themselves are very good-natured and kind; suffice it to say that in their largest prison at Sing-Sing they organize excellent concerts for those condemned to death, on the eve of their execution: they first execute a few hymns and then Chaliapine is executed, and after that there is a general distribution of sandwiches.

In recent times women have played a very important part in Soviet politics. So, too, in Russian literature; Mme. Estafieva, Princess Metchersky and Mme. Nadine Teffy being prominent figures. Mme. Teffy, an exiled authoress, reveals in her skits a keen insight into the psychology of everyday life. From "*At the Restaurant*":

When a lady enters a restaurant, she assumes a dignified air, she tries to look important and somewhat condescending.

Dressed in her best, she wishes to convey the impression that she is wearing her everyday toilet. If she is badly dressed she does her best to give the idea that she only wears smart clothes at home and does not bother to put them on when she dines at a restaurant (so that the restaurant should not get conceited).

When a gentleman enters a smart restaurant he 'pretends he is a regular customer. But if it is just an ordinary restaurant he affects a slightly contemptuous air.

A. Boukhov wrote the sketch, "Rules of Conduct (for the use of others)". His "Art-Lovers" reminds you of Stephen Leacock's "Mrs. Newrich Buys Antiques". Boukhov is also the author of the awfully funny "End of Sherlock Holmes" (on account of which he has earned many sighs of relief from readers).

Vlass Dorochevitch's "How Hassan Lost His Trousers" is a very popular piece, as it is included in more than one collection of Russian stories. The following is from Metcalfe Wood's translation :

Ah! well, such is the title of the story.

"How Hassan Lost his Trousers".

And this is how it happened :

In the large and beautiful town of Baghdad there lived a merchant, rich and respected.

What was his name ?

When he played at the knee of his mother—is not paradise at the knee of his mother?) she called him :

Hassan-Hekki. Hassan, the Happy.

He was young, beautiful, intelligent and rich.

Immensely rich.

What did he need !

However Hassan resolved to marry—

There are many such jokes about marriage, and proverbs about women. As this is not an anthology of Russian jokes, but a study of Russian humour, we will not try to exhaust them subject-wise—but give a joke or two to illustrate our point. A. Boukhov says :

There are again some people who pay court out of sheer laziness, owing to an innate liking for slavery.

Dominado quotes for his part the "celebrated apothegm attributed to the wise and blessed Krichnamoorthi":

A bachelor lives like a man and dies like a dog: a married man lives like a dog and dies like a man.

Here are a few relevant Russian proverbs :

Cherish your wife as you would your salvation, and beat her as you would your coat.

If your wife were a guitar, you could hang her up after playing.

A dog is wiser than a woman, for it does not turn upon its master.

It is a moot question whether proverbs are part of Modern literature : but they do serve to illustrate the development of the spirit and mentality of a nation.

IV

I make no excuse for not attempting an analysis of Russian humour by subjecting it to the ordeals of the dissection table,—not even by

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pleading that I am an anti-vivisectionist. For this is "so complicated and so difficult that the hair of the most learned psychologists on the subject has turned snowy white." I confess I am not a most learned psychologist: I confess also that I do not desire to let my hair turn snowy white so soon.

The scientist's account of a joke is one of the greatest jokes we can think of; for, whereas science deals with studied observations and inferences therefrom, laughter is created by a spontaneous reaction. If you begin to consider whether a joke is worth laughing at or not, and finally decide that it is worth laughing at you find that you can't. Those who have read Henri Bergson's great book on "Laughter" have done so without laughing even once. And besides, Russian humorists do not like certain kinds of philosophising. Typical is the extract given below from Ivan Khemitzer's sketch of the "Philosopher", who falls into a ditch:

He concluded that an earthquake had superinduced a momentary displacement of his corporeal axis, thus destroying his equilibrium, and, in obedience to the law of gravity as established by Newton, precipitating him downward until he encountered an immovable obstacle—namely, the bottom of the ditch.

When his father arrived with the rope, the following conversation ensued:

"I have brought a rope to pull you out with. There now, hold on tight to that end, and don't let go while I pull".

"A rope? Please inform me what a rope is before you pull"—

Matthew Arnold had the questionable habit of quoting just a line from one poet (preferably in Greek or Latin) and place by its side a line from a Middle English poet, and then say that the Greek is the better—a conclusion with which we heartily used to agree on account of our wonderful knowledge of Greek. Un-Arnold-like, I have tried to give sufficiently representative quotations from the various Russian writers in good English translation*: and since I have not tried to draw comparisons on the strength of them, I have a clean conscience on the subject.

* The writer is indebted for his quotations from the various Russian authors to:

1. Ernest Benn Ltd., London. (*Great Russian Short Stories*, edited by Stephen Graham).
2. T. Werner Laurie Ltd., London. (*The Crimson Smile—La Rire dans la Steppe*—edited by Maurice Dekobra).
3. Haldeman Julius Co., Girard, Kansas. (*Masterpieces of Russian Humour*, edited by E. Haldeman-Julius).
4. The Educational Book Co., London. (*The Masterpieces Library of Short Stories*. Vol. XIII. Edited by Sir J. A. Hammerton).

The quotations from Boris Mirsky are from his introduction to "The Crimson Smile" specially written for that volume under the caption, "Commonsense of the Crowd".

There is a large section of people who think that a drab economic and social equality prevails in Russia, and that, on this account, there is no incentive for the progress of art and science and literature in that country. This notion is quite pardonable, and we have, in this article, so far done nothing to dispel it. On the contrary, we have been probably encouraged to think that the Soviet Government have tried to make Russia a humourless nation by driving out of the country all the established humorists of the time. This is a complicated question, leading us into the province of politics ; we shall not pretend to tackle it here.

What we can assert is that there is good humour in the U.S.S.R. of to-day, just as there is scientific, literary and artistic progress. Modern Soviet Russian humour does not appear to be so sad as that of Tsarist Russia. This is not wishful thinking, though I myself sometimes used to suspect that it was.

Mirsky wrote a little before 1930 :

Home-dweller or exile, absolutist or revolutionist, we laugh at our failings, see fun in the dreary and interminable round of daily life. A race that has the courage to make the silent steppes echo with its laughter is a healthy race in spite of everything. It will survive its most severe trials and worst calamities. It will win through by reason of its optimism, which is a sure sign of its vitality — laughter is a healthy balm for which no chemist has the prescription.

To-day, a few years after 1940, we at once see the truth of his remarks made from Paris. It was at one time possible for a Jane Austen to come out uninfluenced by a French Revolution: but such a thing is impossible for a Madame Teffy. Literature of to-day can scarcely live divorced from Politics.

Those who know the Russian language have said that Alexander Kuprin deserves to be at least as popular as Tchekhov. He left Russia, like so many other literary men older than Zoschenko and Kataev, but his stories have been written for consumption in Soviet Russia. "Mechanical Justice" contains a plea, in the manner of Swift, for the flogging of children by a machine instead of by human agency, for "the personal confrontation of two individuals inevitably awakens hate, fear, irritation, revengefulness, contempt and, what is more, a competitive stubbornness in the repetition of crime and punishment."

Michael Zoschenko's story of the "Old Rat" is mildly humorous—like most other stories written after the Revolution by Russia's younger

writers—and is about the old rat of a clerk who insists on seeing for himself all the stages in the manufacture of an aeroplane, towards the cost of which he has contributed a gold rouble.

Valentine Kataev's story, "Things" has been described as 'farcical' but I do not see any farce in it. The theme of this story illustrates Karel Capek's observations on cats. The feline species are essentially feminine and are attached to 'things' rather than individuals. The cat is attached to the home, not to the master. If the master moves house, the dog moves along with him; but the cat stays on.

In Madame Estafieva's "Vania", there is a tear-drawing social study, with a touch of humour introduced when the mother looks upon her stepson in two different lights.

"What striking dissimilarity between the characters of father and son!" thought Anna, picturing to herself the quiet, unsociable Vania. "He must resemble his mother!" and once more the feeling of jealousy, which had tortured her so much in the past, awakened in her heart.

When Vania spreads sweetness and light in the unfortunate home at Christmas time with well-thought out presents,

She gazed at the face of Vania, reddened with joyful excitement, at his eyes that were now speaking with merriment from under her thick eyelashes, and noted with surprise the striking resemblance of the boy to her dead husband.

"Why have I never before noticed it?" she reproached herself in thought.

Even Boris Pilniak's story on Peter the Great ("His Majesty Kneeb Piter Komondor"), which has gained a good deal of well-deserved attention as throwing much light on the post-Revolutionary valuation of Peter, possesses the mild humour—which is a characteristic of a race which feels it has achieved something.

One can go on like this endlessly but it is not advisable to do so, since writing about Russian humorists and English poets very often prevents the readers from reading them. On the whole, the very latest Russian humour does not seem to be as boisterous as that of earlier generations. A people who find life itself quite pleasant do not perhaps find the necessity for horseLaughs, which, they are apt to think, indicate

hollowness—the product of an unhappy nation. The happy, light touch is discernible in modern Russian fiction, both humorous and serious. No slap-stick for them!

The Street Lamps

BY K. K. KAUL

The street lamps
are little cages
where flames take shelter.

Weary birds
frightened,
how frail is their golden light !

They look at
their shadow on the ground
and wonder
' is it possible ?'

They prefer to live
captive in the glass—
these street lamps !

War and Literature

R. V. JAGIRDAR

One peculiarity of the present war is sure to have struck many a literary observer: *viz.*, the absence of any considerable inspiration, direct or indirect, from the war situation for writers of poetry and fiction. In our study of the different literatures of the world, we have been accustomed to find, so regularly as to be almost tempted to prophesy, the flowering of fresh and vigorous literature under the incarnadine shower from Mars. Even the world war I of 1914-18 proved that we were not too civilized to be uninspired by battle-drums. The present war, however, has not only not given us new poets and writers but has even obscured the existing ones.

The situation is more than merely interesting if we bear in mind the issues involved in the present struggle between light and darkness—the light of Liberty and the darkness of Dictatorship. The first year or two of the war showed us the powers against liberty strong in the preparation for, and desperate in the conduct of, the onslaught on individual liberty and the right to happiness. That fact in itself should have sufficiently encouraged the wings of the Muse to soar with the song of liberty. It did not. Even when the war assumed a totalitarian aspect, its gruesome consequences failed to move the hearts of poets.

Can it be that we have out-grown our capacity to feel, and feel intensely? Perhaps not. The passion with which propaganda is on the air (though of short waves!) speaks against such an assumption. Our hearts have taken as intensely to worship the Hero and to condemn the villain as any poetic heart would. Air-raid victims and evacuees move us to a pitch of horror, anger and sympathy that would do credit to any bird of fancy. And yet, there is no spontaneous out-flow of passion and feeling in words melodious or metrical. Nor could it be said that the human heart has found a medium other than poetry or *belles lettres* to convey the sincerity and intensity of its feelings. It is true that every citizen of the warring nations is whole-heartedly identifying himself with the conduct of his nation's war-machine. But to substitute war-effort for poetry is to deny (and also to insult) the divinity in man that makes him grow, through futurity, into eternity. It is true that man is more of a political animal (though now only an economic liability!); but politics has rarely ceased to be the instrument to turn living into an art. No. Rather, the causes which might explain the unusual situation set out above must be sought elsewhere.

Let us first go back to those days in the past when war against nature, and neighbours, was the chief method used by man to make a living in this world. He had to be strong to live, and the longer he lived

the stronger and better he was considered to be. A strong man was feared, admired and then worshipped. Even when man made a community of so many families, his strength, when it offered protection to his community, was worshipped as before. The art of fighting symbolised the art of protection and survival. Our earliest heroes were great protectors and great killers. As society developed, individual fights turned into group fights. Group fights did not, however, mean indiscriminate fighting but was as individual in character as ever before. Chivalry on the battlefield and the various codes of 'fair fight' are evidences of this supposition. Thus, in this stage, fighting was understood not merely as strength but strength with virtuous limitations. It is for this reason that wars, in the old days, inspired poets ; they produced heroes, and heroes are the stuff of which poetry could naturally be made. Strength, chivalry, protection, prosperity—these attributes of hero-ship made the old wars a theme of admiration. The armies ranged on opposite sides represented two teams both equally trained for the particular purpose ; and the rest of the world watched from the galleries, so to say. The poet played the role of a modern broadcaster of sports-matches. Even if the old wars were costly, kings and noblemen paid for them and if, incidentally, the poor suffered,—well, they were born to suffer. So the poet did not need to feel conscience-stricken if he felt inspired to sing in sublime glee of the great ones robed in glory.

In the twentieth century, things and their values have changed greatly. We tolerate the poor, but we dispute their right to continue so. With the advance of science, wars have become as costly and as cruel—and, as if to spite democracy, we insist on the equality of all in sharing the burdens of the war. It is no longer the case of two professional teams meeting each other in a combat. To be wounded was to be a hero in those days ; now the highest reward for being wounded is a disability pension. To die on the battle-field was a point of glory then ; now the glory is gone since the millions of non-combatants at home have equal chances of claiming it. There was a battle-field for wars in the old days ; but in these days we can witness the war in our bye-lanes—with the result that war has lost the enchantment lent by distance and is seen in all its nearness and naked horror. The present war is the first totalitarian war that mankind has ever fought. Hence whole masses of human beings are in the grips of hunger and horror. To-day we are fighting not so much for an idealism as for the very right to exist. And this—after boastful centuries of improved culture and better civilization ! That is why poets do not sing of the glories of wars—they are simply ashamed of them, more so because wars are still inevitable.

Sweet Rice Cakes

BY VAJJHA BABU RAO

(Rendered from the Telugu story, by P. Venkateswarulu)

I am the eldest daughter of my father. My mother passed away on the seventh day of her confinement and my father remarried on the thirteenth day of her demise. By the time I began to remember things, my step-mother was already the mother of three children.

My father did not set about my marriage till I was ten years old. My granny dinging the subject off and on into his ears, he began to look for a groom. Saying that he couldn't find a suitable match and asserting that the wedding might be performed in Vaisakh next year, he gave up his trials that year.

That Vaisakh my step-mother fell seriously ill. She lay bedridden for four months. Many a time during that time, she lay between life and death. Several doctors were called in and many medicines were tried. Spirit doctors tried their arts and charms. All to no purpose. As a last resort cobra poison (*garalam*) was tried. After a time there was a turn for the better, and the patient was gradually nursed back to health.

Who could think of my marriage while my step-mother was ill? My granny, however, added this to the list of troubles besetting the house consequent on my step-mother's illness, as she laboriously recounted them to the people who visited us during this period. My father said that as it became impossible to perform the marriage in Vaisakh, he would certainly get it done in Magh (February-March). "The marriage can be performed any month, but should we not secure a match in keeping with our status?" my parent used to say. Every person who came to him on business told him of a young man here or another there and my poor dad sent his men to all these places. Some replied : "We have no idea of performing the marriage this year;" others : "They are too far above us"; still others : "We cannot get ready by Magh." All these replies were duly reported to my father. Half of Magh slipped by in such futile negotiations. No groom was to be had anywhere. By then I had completed twelve years.

Those who saw me exclaimed, "Oh; this girl is not yet married!" I was of a somewhat robust build. Instead of asking if I was married, many, on seeing me, enquired if I was living with my husband or about to live with

him. My granny's commotion disturbed the household constantly. My father's friends and kinsmen questioned how it was possible to keep me unmarried yet. My father was perturbed and perplexed. "If a groom can be found anywhere!" he sobbed. In the end a suitable match was secured in a neighbouring hamlet. When a liberal dowry was offered, a certain householder consented to have me for his son's bride.

My mind had no rest till the groom was secured. "It is all right if a match is secured by Vaisakh. If not, I will have for a groom any wayfarer and offering him four acres have the marriage." These words of my father pained me considerably. I was troubled with, "what sort of a husband is destined for me?" Learning these people had landed property and also the *karnikam*, I was consoled.

Then I had qualms about the good looks of the bride-groom. While my people were talking about his parents and their status, I listened, feigning sleep or hiding under the stairway or in the room. Much as I heard about them, I wished to hear still more.

My granny (mother's mother) lived in our house and looked after me. Speaking to my father, she had said, "Well, is your son-in-law the youth who came riding here last year on the Ratha Jatra day (car festival)?" That carnival season I had seen him, but how could I know that he would be the bride-groom? If I had known, I mused, I should have observed him with greater attention. All the same, I had a faint remembrance of having seen him then. I tried hard to recall to my mind his nose, mouth, eyes, ears and the locks over his forehead.

The bustle of marriage preparations gathered volume as the wedding day approached. Our cattle sheds were cleaned. A big pendal was put up in the court-yard. Pappadams, vadiams, pickles and other staple foods were got ready; pulses and rice in several forms were prepared and stored in the kitchen. Fearing rain during the marriage days, the big stoves were set up in the spacious back parlour. Cooking was begun here when the wedding was still five or six days off. When there were two or three days for the marriage, our kinsmen all came in bullock carts. Whenever bells tinkled, I came out to see.

Our mansion, so spacious, was filled up with the guests. New clothes, areca nut, nutmeg, and other necessary articles were got from Guntur by my grand-father. My father's room was crowded with these packages. The stores were under the custody of the brother of my step-mother.

SWEET RICE CAKES

The day previous, my people anointed me the bride. Two girls were chosen as the bride's maids. The wedding mark (*Tilak*) was put on my forehead, the black dot on my cheek, and the red fringe on my feet. Our local band played. My kith and kin gave me gifts of sarees, rupees, gold rings etc.

That evening my aunt (father's sister), granny and another crony were making sweet rice cakes, so necessary for the marriage ritual. Going there and seated on a low stool, I was eating them while partaking of their gossip. My cousin (aunt's son) came up and stood beside me. "Auntie, give Ramu also a cake; let him also eat one," said I pointing to another low stool for him. My aunt giving him a cake said, "If my Ramu were older by two years, he should have married our Sundari!" My cousin was older by a year and a half, about my height and I always used to poke fun at him.

As Ramu sat eating by me, I dabbed his cheeks with the ghee that stuck to my fingers as I ate the cakes, and said, "Ramu, you should have, perhaps, been my husband." He cried, "Mother, see, she is rubbing ghee on my cheeks - the naughty girl - mind, I will complain to the bride-groom."

My granny said, "After all, it is the writing of Brahma." No one spoke for a time. I was watching the making of the cakes—when bells were heard in the street. "See, if Venkamma is come," said granny. "Ramu, what we have eaten is enough; let us go out and see; come." So saying I took his hand and dragging him after me, went and stood by the gate. My cousin Venkamma and her children alighted from the cart. In the act of getting down Venkamma said, "Why, Ramu, are you the body-guard of the bride?" "Till Sundari is handed over to the groom, I watch that none might steal her away," he retorted.

"A good sentinel, sister," I echoed.

II

It was all bustle when I woke up next morning. Many had hoarse voices—the result of calling out loudly to one another. The cook was bawling out: "The stoves are wasting. Measure the rice for the morning meal of the children, sir." My uncle was saying to my father: "It is getting late; call the band; go and invite our townsfolk. When the marriage party arrives there will be hardly time. Buchamma, start early to invite the housewives" said he to my step-mother. In a short while, my father, mother and some others set out with the band to invite the townsfolk to the wedding dinner.

Our purohit (family priest) had taken the *Lagnapatrika* to my father-in-law's house the previous evening. The time was fast approaching when the party should arrive. My uncle calling a servant said, "Fellow, go out and see how far away the bride-groom's party is."

I was cleaning my teeth seated on the stone-bench in the back-yard. My uncle was talking in loud tones to somebody in the front parlour. Those engaged in their several tasks suddenly left off in the middle and ran in. The cook observing me said, "Little mother, see that no dogs or crows enter,"—saying which he decamped after cleaning his hands.

While I was rubbing down my face, the cook came back to the stove and turning the ladle, said, "What row, what cheek!" Apprehending some daring theft, I enquired, "What is it, sir?"

"The purohit has returned. The groom's party have refused to come."

"Any untoward happening?"

"No, nothing—damn them—your uncle Pullayya's brother had, it seems, dined with London-returned people. So your uncle and through him you have all, they deem, lost caste. Somebody informed them of this as they were about to start having finished *snatakam* (ceremony of anointing the bride-groom). Thereupon they said that they did not want this match. How could these people have given up such a connection, listening to persons who delight in breaking off marriages at the point of pronouncing the vows? Poor man! What preparations he has made! The house, too, is full of relations. Townsfolk have been invited to the wedding feast. Dinner is being got ready. It is like a barge capsizing in midstream!"

I could not think. Whoever thought that the wedding would be prevented thus? To find out the truth for myself, I went into the parlour. My uncle was walking to and fro talking very loudly. His whole body was perspiring. Being somewhat obese, he was breathing rather heavily. The rest were standing about, stunned and motionless. Leaning against a pillar sadly, with his hand on his chin, my father stood brooding.

"Surayya, if you brood like this the marriage won't be performed. Should we stop it because those rogues have refused to come? If I do not get the wedding done at the appointed *lagnam*, to spite their very faces, as it were, I am not a Niyogi Brahmin" said my uncle.

Hearing these words I feared that my uncle had lost his senses.

SWEET RICE CAKES

I wondered how he imagined that the wedding could be performed without the groom.

"Surayya, our preparations would be wasted. We will be put to shame before all. If the girl is not married here and now, people will ascribe some defect to her. No use of regrets later on. Listen to me. There is a difference of one and a half years between Ramu and Sundari. Give him a bath and let *snatakam* be proceeded with. After thirteen *ghatikas* and odd there is a *Muhurtham*. The knot shall be tied then" said my uncle.

I was observing my father's face. It brightened up. "Yes, we shall do it," said he. As I looked about me, my cousin was near me leaning against the wall. When I saw his worship, I was suddenly abashed. As I started in a hurry to run to the back-yard, my cousin caught hold of my skirt: "Wherefrom did you get all this modesty?" said he. My uncle saw him. "Ramu, you can bandy words with your cousin later; come here now," said he. In a trice I reached my room.

III

Lying on my bed I gazed long at the picture of "Savitri and Satyavan". Soon I began to doze.

When I opened my eyes, my step-mother was tapping me on the back, saying, "Sundari, are you here? Get up and come. I will give you the oil bath and you may worship Gouri."

After some time my uncle carried me, seated in a basket to the place of marriage, which was packed to capacity with people. The women were standing together in a group. Two brahmins were standing holding a cloth across in front of the bridegroom and chanting hymns. I did not remember all that had happened that morning. I wanted to see how the groom was like. I tried to see his features through the sheet that was held between us. After a while I could just make out his face, vaguely though. Suddenly the screen was removed. When I looked at him, he was only my aunt's son! I was quite astonished. I fancied I was still sleeping. So thinking, I began rubbing my eyes, when he rose up and tied the *Mangala Sutram*. I suddenly recalled all that had happened before I went to sleep.

That night *Sthalipakam* was performed. While I sat with my head bowed, I was observing him from top to toe. He was not as he used to be. From the time he became the bride-groom, somehow he looked rather different.

Next day was the nautch day. We played with the flower balls, my husband and I. Old housewives sang songs. The nautch band was on. My mind was not in them. It was all occupied with the bride-groom.

That night after performing *Havan* (worship of Fire by offering oblations of ghee and faggots to the chant of hymns), I went and sat down on the stone-bench in the back-yard. There was nobody there. Presently, I felt that some one was approaching. As I turned round, my husband was come and was standing beside me. I tried to rise.

"Eh, have I not become the bride-groom?" laughed his worship. I ran away in sheer bashfulness.

After several years I went to live with my husband. My mother-in-law was preparing sweet rice cakes one day. I sat near her eating them. Presently my lord came there in haste, saw me and said, "Won't you order some for me too?"

I rose up--a piece of cake fell down from my hand. Without stopping I ran to the parlour. My lord tracked me there and laughed, "Do you smear my cheeks now with ghee, eh?"

Recalling that incident of the marriage day, I was covered with shame all of a sudden and hid my face. Whenever these cakes are to be cooked or eaten I feel, even now, very much abashed.

My lord came near me and whispered something in my ear. I could not make it out. I put out my hand and, all unawares, the ghee on my fingers dabbed the cheeks of my dear, dear lord!

Sri Narayana Guru—An Appreciation

BY SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

Romain Rolland, in his well-known work "The Life of Ramakrishna" speaking about the Great Shepherds of Modern India, refers also to numerous less known spiritual leaders, and introduces Sri Narayana as the 'Great Guru'

"whose beneficent spiritual activity was exercised for more than forty years in the State of Travancore over some million faithful souls. He preached, if one may say so, a Jnana of action, a great intellectual religion, having a very lively sense of the people, and their social needs. It has greatly contributed to the uplifting of the oppressed classes in Southern India and its activities have in a measure been allied to those of Gandhi." (Footnote to p. 166)

Sri Narayana Guru came of a section of India's population which possessed no rights and privileges and which consequently received the name of Depressed Classes in modern times. Totally neglected and often oppressed and suppressed for a thousand years by the higher classes, the seventy million Depressed Classes of India, as of other parts of the world, constituted the basis of economic prosperity and social well-being of the country, as they formed the entire labour front. Continued slavery for generations had produced in these classes, as it is bound to produce in any class of men, an oppressive sense of its own littleness and helplessness—a sense of despair. Slavery is bad enough; but a situation in which the slave begins to accept his position as part of a natural social order—a position in which there is dictated duty without any inherent right and privilege—is something which reduces man to the level of cattle and robs him of his human prerogatives. This was precisely the condition of the Indian masses at the beginning of the nineteenth century when India was thrown open to the play of world forces. The mingling of the age-old idealism of India with the thought-forms and forces of the modern world has ushered a new epoch in Indian History, whose foundations were laid in the last century by the life and work of a few great leaders and the movements associated with them. These teachers and movements mainly appealed to the higher classes generating in them a sense of past guilt and of their present 'duty to the masses.' The movements have borne fruit so that the Renaissance in India does not exhaust itself in a mere political upheaval but assumes the more enduring forms of a religious awakening and social transformation. The world outside sees mostly India's political awakening. Far more important to India herself is the great struggle for

social justice and social well-being that is going on within her bosom. It is, in the words of Swami Vivekananda,

"a struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things—sympathy for the poor—and bread to their hungry mouths—enlightenment to the people at large—and struggle unto death to make men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts, by the tyranny of your forefathers."

Thanks to the work of Ram Mohan and Dayananda, Vivekananda and Gandhi, Hindu Society has seriously taken in hand the work of self-purification. The Charter of Freedom has been proclaimed with no uncertain voice and the dead-weight of custom and tradition is being slowly lifted. We have also to be beholden to western thought and political practice which have helped to break our 'crystallised civilization.' Social progress in India has always been on the lines of the sharing of the benefits of culture and of higher Hindu thought by larger and larger sections of the population. Democratisation of knowledge and of opportunity meant also the elevation of the people. The best genius of Hinduism lay in this direction in a special sense. If there had been stagnation due to the dead-weight of meaningless custom and oppressive tradition, it meant only that society had forgotten the larger plan and purpose of the ancient leaders. Society is then in need of a new dynamism. In India, this urge to progress has always come from great saints and sages and not from mere political thinkers. A new passion for *dharma* has supplied the necessary revolutionary urge. Hinduism seeks to demonstrate that the progress and well-being of the masses do not lie against religion. They are, more properly, tests as to the soundness of a religion. Swami Vivekananda sums up this outlook and programme in the formula: "Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion."

But the awakening of the conscience of the privileged is only one act in the drama of enfranchisement. The other equally, if not more important, part is the process of self-discovery on the part of the oppressed themselves. This period of awakening of the Mass to a sense of its own worth and importance is a critical period in the history of a people. It may be either explosive and destructive or gentle and constructive; but the effect is revolutionary in both cases. The most serious criticism against a violent revolution is that it rarely achieves its original purposes. The second type is more permanent and far-reaching in its effects.

That these recent changes in Hindu Society are of a peaceful and constructive character is as much owing to the good sense of the Indian

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masses as to the soundness of Hindu social philosophy and ideals. The movement of reform associated with Sri Narayana Guru is unique in one important respect. It is entirely constructive and devoid of any bitterness against the higher classes. All over the world, the unprivileged classes, in their awakening, have manifested what may be called legitimate hostility and bitterness against the privileged. All the blame has been attached to one side. From the purely human point of view, there may be some justification for this attitude and the class-hatred that it fosters. But it is harmful to the abiding interests of social health and well-being. The theory that all social progress is the result of class-antagonism and class war is yet to be proved. The clash of interests in a society is inevitable. What is not so evident is that social progress is the beneficent result of such clashes. It is more reasonable to hold that true progress is possible only where class antagonism is least, in virtue of the emphasis on ideas and ideals which are the common wealth of all classes. This is the meaning and significance of the Indian conception of *Dharma*—a conception which seeks the unity of social endeavour through harmony and co-operation. It is to the eternal glory of Sri Narayana Guru to have inaugurated a movement which embodies in itself this unique genius of Hinduism and to have released the forces of the spirit for the solution of the many pressing problems of even the mundane life of his people. In this, he takes rank with the saints and reformers of earlier centuries and, more specially, with Guru Nanak the founder of the Sikh fraternity. Except in one respect, there is striking similarity between the life and work of these two masters who are separated by about five centuries. Nanak belonged to the higher classes but fraternised with and reformed the lowly and the lost in Hindu Society. Narayana Guru was born with the social stigma of an untouchable among whom he worked and whose life he transformed. The lowness of his birth could in no way hide or smother the richness of his native endowment. It is this wealth of native genius that enabled him to raise himself and his people above the depressing circumstances of an unjust social order. He imparted life to the almost dead bones and muscles of his people and made them conscious of their human worth and dignity. Rightly is he called 'the Guru' whose breath is hope and whose touch is life.

Sri Narayana shows himself at his best in wisdom and discernment in the role of a religious and social reformer. There has been no dearth of reformers and reform proposals in modern India. But most of the social reforms advocated by them are more ornamental than real. In his famous

lecture on 'My Plan of Campaign', Swami Vivekananda refers to this problem in these words :

"To the reformers I will point out, that I am a greater reformer than any of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root-and-branch reform. Where we differ is in the method. Theirs is the method of destruction; mine is that of construction. I do not believe in reform; I believe in growth.....We admit there are evils. Everybody can show what evil is, but he is the friend of mankind who finds a way out of the difficulty. Like the drowning boy and the philosopher, when the philosopher was lecturing him the boy cried—'Take me out of the water first'; so our people cry : 'We have had lectures enough, papers enough, societies enough, where is the man who will lend us a hand to drag us out ? Where is the man who has sympathy for us ?' Aye, that man is wanted."

About the time these words were spoken at Madras by the great prophet of the modern Indian Renaissance, the sunken masses of the neighbouring province of Kerala were finding their hopes and their voice in the personality of Sri Narayana Guru who had by then started his silent work of transformation. World events are compelling us to the view that the best legislative authority in the world is Character. The *Rishi* has always been recognised as the law-giver in India. His knowledge and his detachment constitute the guarantee for the equity of his legislation. In Sri Narayana Guru the people found such a law-giver. Himself a monk and a man of God, in virtue of which he rose above all social conventions and obligations, he yet descended to the level of his fellowmen in an attitude of compassion, and lent his loving hands to drag them out of their misery. And he had the supreme satisfaction to witness, even in his own life-time, the ample reward of his labours in the improved moral tone and the material well-being of his people.

Sri Narayana Guru is reputed to have been a great Ayurvedic physician. But he was a greater physician of social maladies. He prescribed education as the one remedy for all the ills of the depressed classes. He was the unwearied champion of modern education for his people. This was to pave the way for their economic and social advancement. Equally important is the acquirement of culture, for which he prescribed Sanskrit education. A third vital need was spiritual sustenance, which comes first in importance in his scheme. To meet this need, he consecrated temples and shrines. Temples, modern education, and Sanskrit culture formed the integral parts of the Guru's method of 'root-and-branch reform.' In asking his people to depend upon their own resources he inspired them with self-respect and self-help which helped to draw out their latent capacities.

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The power thus released was canalised into constructive channels resulting in the creation of a network of institutions to serve the religious, educational, social and economic needs of the community throughout the Province of Kerala.

The curse of untouchability is practised in its most extreme form in Kerala, for which that province had earned the name of 'a lunatic asylum' from Swami Vivekananda. The thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi mingled with the silent and steady work of Sri Narayana Guru led to the great act of expiation in the famous Temple-entry Proclamation, which at one stroke bridged the wide gulf that separated the classes from the masses and wiped away one of the deep-seated stains on the Society and the Province. In this great achievement, Sri Narayana Guru's contribution has been immense. Under the inspiration of his name and ideals, the depressed classes of Kerala are making rapid strides in educational advancement and economic improvement. In regard to several sections of them, the name 'depressed class' is a thorough misnomer to-day. It is only a question of time when this stigma on them and on Hindu Society will be a thing of the past, not merely in the Province of Sri Narayana Guru's birth but also in the whole of India. This was the dream of Swami Vivekananda as it is the passion of Mahatma Gandhi to-day. Only then will be accomplished the purification and strengthening of Hindu Society and Hindu Religion when the paralysed limb of Society comprising the seventy million people of the unprivileged classes will be galvanised into self-conscious activity, and contribute their share to the building up of a healthier national life. In this great work of reform and consolidation in the wider field of India, the ideals and methods of Sri Narayana Guru are bound to be an unfailing source of inspiration and guidance. In all that he was and all that he did, Sri Narayana Guru stands as the supreme symbol of hope and redemption to the depressed classes of India.

The Baha'i House of Worship in Chicago

By PRITAM SINGH

At Chicago, U. S. A., on the shore of Lake Michigan, the Baha'i House of Worship has recently been completed. The foundation was laid by the hands of Abdul Baha himself in 1912.

The Baha'i Temple has aroused the enthusiastic interest of architects because of the new principles of design and decoration which Mr. Louis Bourgeois incorporated in his unique model of the completed structure. It has drawn the attention of engineers because of the unusual problems of construction which had to be solved in order to bring the architect's plans into actual existence. But the problems presented and solved in the Baha'i House of Worship and the accessory institutions which will be added include those of an even more fundamental significance than the ones presented to the architect and engineer.

Humanity to-day is entering into the dawn of a new age. Customs and institutions of an outworn civilization are disintegrating. When the world has been cleared of their debris, the foundation of a new world order will rise, and on it the new civilization of universal brotherhood and peace will be established. The Baha'i Temple is the expression in material form of the spiritual power which will establish the age of peace and co-operation throughout the world. It is a symbol of the Divine Will which, in this new day, will weld all mankind into a great spiritual brotherhood, in which differences of race, nationality, class and creed will cease to separate men into suspicious, warring groups.

Structurally, the Temple is remarkable as it comprises a steel, reinforced concrete and glass frame-work, on which has been placed the highly ornamental surface material. It is a nonagon, or nine-sided structure; each side having the form of a circular arc, with a large doorway in the centre: and the whole edifice gives the appearance of extending welcoming arms to the people approaching from every direction. It has nine avenues, nine gardens, nine pools, and nine fountains playing in the gardens.

Entering any one of the nine doors, one passes through a hallway into the central circular room or auditorium. Out of this main hall open radially (and separated by the hallways) nine smaller rooms, comparable to chapels in a cathedral. The central domed hall has an area of about

THE BAHĀ'I HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN CHICAGO

4,000 square feet and will seat about 700 people. The nine auxiliary rooms will seat about 100 persons each.

The building of this structure has been financed by the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, assisted by contributions from all parts of the world. The land on which the House of Worship stands was acquired at intervals from 1909 to 1914, at a total cost of about \$ 125,000. The structure rests upon nine caissons of steel and concrete, which are sunk 120 feet in the ground in order to reach bedrock. The caissons and the foundation structure cost some \$ 200,000. The total cost has been about \$ 930,000.

Let us now turn from the description of the physical structure and building the Baha'i House of Worship to a consideration of its social and spiritual significance.

To the Baha'i the oneness of mankind is 'no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope.' It necessitates so close a sense of unity with *all* men that prejudices of class, race, nationality and creed must be absolutely destroyed. The more intimately man understands and serves all people the nearer he comes to the knowledge of God. The Baha'i seeks to attain 'transparent fellowship' with every human being he meets, in order that a truly Divine Unity may be spread through the world.

Worship in the Baha'i Temple is a privilege freely offered to *all* men and women, who, forsaking the limitations of prejudices and creeds, seek to enter into a true spiritual communion with God, and into a loving, unity with their fellows.

In Chicago, in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Baha' when laying the foundation said:

"The purpose of places of worship and edifices for adoration is simply that of unity, in order that various nations, divergent races, varying souls may gather there and among them amity, love and accord may be realized."

This House of Worship will include a hospital and dispensary, a school for orphan children, a hospice, and a college for higher scientific education. In these institutions the principles of the oneness of mankind will be put into concrete practice. Their services will be dispensed irrespective of color, race or nationality.

The significance to the social order of the Baha'i ideal which is taking concrete form in the Baha'i House of Worship in Chicago can best

be summarised in the words of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith:

"Nothing short of direct and constant interaction between the spiritual forces emanating from this House of Worship and the energies consciously displayed by those who administer its affairs in their service to humanity can possibly provide the necessary agency capable of removing the evils that have so long and so grievously afflicted humanity. For it is assuredly upon the consciousness of the efficacy of the Revelation of Baha'u'llah, reinforced, on the one hand, by spiritual communion with His Spirit, and, on the other, by the intelligent application and the faithful execution of the principles and laws He revealed, that the salvation of a world in travail must ultimately depend."

Moonlight

BY M. GILBERT

Rapt mystery in the arms of magic strange
Lies in the moonlight. In the lotus tank
The sheeted glory, like a mirror blank,
Awakes the shapes of scarce-remembered change.
Where silence hooded brooding shadows range,
And lilies kneel communing with the dank
Irradiance, a power above all rank
Unites what nature's grossness doth estrange :

What mystery in the heart of human being,
Inviolable, unchemistried, affined
To nature's heart-beat blooms to love and spring,
Wherein enchanted land beyond our seeing,
Through moonlight casement of undiscovered mind,
Imagination's wizardry can wing ?

The Agaria*

By S. SRIKANTAIYA

This companion volume to the Baiga on the life, customs, jurisprudence and other aspects of the life of the dwellers of the Maikal Hills and the lonely zamindaries of Bilaspur, whom Mr. Elwin calls 'The Agaria', i.e. black-smiths or iron smelters, is a distinctive contribution to Indian Ethnology—a result of close association, steady perseverance and intimate personal knowledge. Though the several customs and habits of the Agaria are similar to those of the primitive tribes of the neighbourhood, still the Agaria have distinctive features of their own, particularly in regard to the highly developed and significant totemistic features; and their vitality, striking mythology and their magic practices and superstitions provide a fascinating study to the anthropologist. .

Iron smelting and manufacture of high grade steel is an ancient Indian industry, practised successfully in different parts of India. It is, however, difficult to believe that iron engines of war were in use between B.C. 2000 and B.C. 1000, as Neogi has suggested. But we may gather from Herodotus that the Indian soldiers in Xerxes army had arrows of cane tipped with iron. The famous iron column of Qutb Minar near Delhi is thousands of years old perhaps, and its seven or eight tons of metal were manipulated with mysterious and amazing skill. The 'steel of Hyderabad' is of very great antiquity showing remarkable qualities in workmanship and the art of damascening was very widely practised in ancient India, particularly in connection with arms. India exported high grade steel to Rome, Egypt, Abyssinia, etc., as we find from references in the *Periplus*. The Phoenicians were familiar with our bright iron and steel, the manufacture of which was a preciously guarded secret, unknown to the Romans who imported it. The King of Persia had two wonderful swords of Indian steel and Alexander the Great received a hundred talents of Indian steel. The Hindus had workshops in which were forged the most famous sabres in the world even as recently as the seventeenth century. .

In Mysore, as elsewhere, the smelting of iron and manufacture of steel were by similar processes as employed elsewhere. Four bellowsmen to work by turns, three men to make charcoal, three women and a man to collect and wash the sand containing iron were required. A furnace was

*By Verrier Elwin, published by the Oxford University Press, Indian Branch, Price Rs. 12-8-0.

built in which was put a basketful of charcoal, measuring about a bushel, adding on to it twice the quantity of black sand which his two hands held like a cup could hold together. Covering this with another basketful of charcoal, the furnace would be fed by the bellows to increase the heat, similar quantities of sand and charcoal being added again and again so that the quantity of sand put into the furnace in one smelting would be 617 cubic inches, i.e., $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs avoirdupois, when dry, yielding 11 wedges or 47% of malleable iron. The forging house would require three hammermen, of whom one was a foreman, and four men to supply charcoal from the bamboo. In one day, three furnaces were smelted and 33 wedges forged. The workmen were paid every fourth day. Of 132 pieces prepared, the proprietor took 35 the *panchala* or blacksmith got 10, the foreman 8, the bellowsman who removed the dross and ashes 5, two women who washed the sand 5 each, and the remaining 16 persons 4 each. The blacksmith found the iron implements anvil, hammer, etc. the proprietor met the expense of the 276 fanams needed.

The Agaria are a class of people who are absorbed in their craft and their material, with little life apart from the roar of the bellows and the clang of the hammers upon the iron they smelt. Generally, they are short-lived, their memories are poor and they have left no outstanding personalities. In stature they are short, sturdy, square-headed with broad heavy noses, thin-lipped, very dark in colour with straight hair and unattractive. They are rather stupid, dull and heavy, but pleasant and mediocre. In origin non-Aryan, they may be connected with the Dravidians, such as the Korma described by Dutton and Risley, the Pharia and the Mandala Agaria. All sections of the Agaria, wherever living, possess distinctive physical and cultural characteristics; they follow the same profession, and technique, and believe in the same mythology, gods and magic. They are a hard-working lot and have no politics.

Myths, confused and contradictory, lie at the root of their social relations and form the basis of the religious and economic structure of the Agaria society, myths and rituals not often influencing and reacting on one other to a considerable extent. Their heroes blend into one another, changing their character and even their sex, reminding us of the Babylonian myths.

The term 'Agaria' is probably derived from *Ag* or fire. The Agaria, as we are told, are not a homogeneous tribe, form many different sects living in areas far removed from one other, diversified by small customs

THE AGARIA

and even by name, owning no relationship to one other, yet united by a common appearance, mythology and technique. They extract iron from the ore in small clay furnaces, using the bellows of a particular kettledrum pattern, which are covered by cowhide and worked with their feet. They worship the tribal gods or demons who are clearly associated with the ancient Asuras, such as Lohasur, Koelasur, and Agyasur. The heroes of their elaborate mythology are the Logundi Raja, Jwala Mukhi, and Kariya Kuar. They are ignorant of the Hindu Vulcan, Tvashtri or Visvakarma. It is said that the Pandavas attacked and destroyed their iron city and the old kingdom of Logundi Raja. Other accounts narrate that Bhagavan Sri Krishna destroyed their city. The Agaria are hard-working fellows, proud of their craft and devoted to their work.

The Agaria are made up of a number of endogamous divisions, have a distinctive method of fixing the material of their covering, the nature of their totem ; and the kind of bangles which Agaria women should wear mark them off from the others. Between these different tribes, there is very little social intercourse, their geographical distribution perhaps rendering it difficult. The Agaria society is divided into septs which are exogamous and hereditary through the male line for succession to property, and totemistic. Clan-incest and kinship-incest are rare, while common amongst their non-totemic neighbours. Their origin can be traced back to the classic heroes of the tribe rising in the dim antiquity of their famous myths. The reverence to be paid to the plant or animal totem of the sept is obvious; for example, the members of the Jal Sept should not eat fish, the Kewachi should not pick the flower of that name, the Kukra should not eat the cock, the Nagas should not kill a cobra, not only because of the sign of mourning resulting from it but because that is defiling the ancestor and progenitor of the family. An Agaria myth gives the economic basis for the cult of demons or godlings of the smithy, establishes a tariff of sacrifices and suggests reasons for possible failure of the required output of iron. Religious observances find their sanction in myth and legend and folklore, on which also depend social relationships, concerning the origin of fire, human sacrifices, and so on. The Agaria creation myths, the kingdom of the Logundi Raja, the war with the sun, the origin of gods,—all make interesting reading. Lohasur, the godling or demon of the furnace, has the appearance of a child inside the kilns, according to a most popular myth. Fire is his friend and he knows no other. Evidently, the black-smith is an admixture of reverence and fear.

The author believes that by whatever name they are known in the different places which the Agaria or the people belonging to this and its subsects inhabit, the whole of the Agaria are all ultimately one tribe. He even considers that the Agaria and Asur are descendants of one tribe which is represented by the Asura of Sanskrit literature, i.e., the metal-workers who are said to have brought to an end the stone age in India, though there is a considerable body of opinion opposed to this view. It is possible that this ancient Asur tribe invaded the Munda country in Chota Nagpur, were driven back by the Maratas rallying under the standard of their deity Sing Bonga, to the very borders of Bihar, and thence spread west and north through Surguja and Udaipur, Korea and north of Bilaspur, while a weaker branch filtered down to Raipur, until the Agaria found a congenial home in the Maikal Hills, with a plentiful supply of iron. The Agaria in this belt, called the Agaria belt, numbering about 11,000, represent a cultural stratum different from that of the Munda and other agricultural Kolarian or proto-Austroloid tribes and different also from that of such hunting proto-Austroloid tribes as the Birhar, Baiga etc.. Between the Agaria and the Asur, and the Mundas of whom the former are often regarded as a branch, quite apart from certain distinct physical and cultural resemblances among all sections of the Asur-Agaria which is noticeable, there is enough to indicate, from their professional technique and mythology, that perhaps the Asur-Agaria came originally from the proto-Austroloid Munda stock or the different branches of it, or that the Asur-Agaria, as we know them, might have been formed by a few stray survivors of the ancient Asura in Chota-Nagpur, swelled and consolidated by accretions from different branches of the Munda stock who took to iron-smelting as their occupation. We regret with Mr. Elwin that sufficient prominence is not given in the census reports to the Agaria as a caste or tribe, owing perhaps to faulty methods of inquiry and inaccurate and erroneous statements found in the information furnished. Russell and Hiralal suggest that the Agaria may be an offshoot of the Gonda tribe but this is obviously incorrect, not being based on scientific investigations conducted on the spot.

To the Agaria, iron is magic iron, vestal iron that is powerful to protect him from earthquake and lightning and every assault of the ghostly enemies. This aboriginal iron has brought the law of plenty to the jungle and gives food, not weapons of war. Absence of coal, water and iron in the near neighbourhood has let this primitive industry survive amongst the Agaria, since the big iron industries have been founded elsewhere.

THE AGARIA

So, neither foreign competition nor famine, neither poor technique nor pitiful earnings have destroyed these little clay furnaces in many parts of India,—perhaps also because of the villagers' preference for tools made from the soft and malleable ores and by the village smelters.

The Agaria especially use virgin iron in marriage ceremonies and as a protection against evil spirits. Iron is often buried with the dead and iron nails are driven to the door as charm and to trees to make them fertile. Iron rings are a protective ornament for man and, like a horseshoe, used as talismans. While iron has an important effect on material objects believed to be possessed by spiritual beings, virgin iron is regarded as valuable against cosmic dangers or acts of God and the Agaria make rings, anklets and so on for magic uses.

Quite appropriately, Rai Bahadur S. C. Ray, the great ethnologist, whose demise recently we so much mourn, wrote the foreword to this book, alas, his last, and no student of Indian ethnology can look for a better recognition than that from this patient and exact scholar and ardent champion of the aborigines.

The Child

BY DHANUS

The aged sanyasi with long silvery
beard sat in the shadow of an old temple.

A little child ran up to him with
anklets jingling, and pulling his beard
asked in clear ringing voice, "Tell me
Grand-father, how long will it take me to
grow a beard so long?"

The sanyasi ceased telling his beads.
His eyes that were looking at the child
were tear-laden. He longed to be a child
again!

S. Satyamurthi—a Sketch

BY K. S. G.

Fifty-six is old age by Indian standards. Satyamurthi was fifty-six when he passed away at Madras in the last week of March 1943 leaving a gaping void in Indian public life. And yet no one who knew him can figure him as an old man. His bearing and energy both in talk and gesture, his great self-confidence and buoyancy of spirit placed him among those rare individuals who may be called God's own young men, dowered with the gift of eternal youth. A walking stick with a large hook at one end formed part of his out-door equipment. But he always carried it slung down from his arm. It rarely supported him. During the last few years, however, he was in indifferent health. The privations of jail-life, mental rather than physical in character, must have oppressed him sorely : but he would have fought to the end —fought against the unreasoning and implacable approach of Death, against the prospect of enforced separation from the scene of his life's labours, from his daughter whom he loved so tenderly, as he had fought against similar forces all his life.

Satyamurthi was the most brilliant and indefatigable Parliamentarian of his day not excepting the big guns like Nehru, Das and others, whose boom, if louder and more impressive, was never of such long duration, nor so consistently devastating. Satyamurthy took to the work of Legislative Councils, Assemblies and other deliberative bodies like fish to water, and turned his back on his professional life even at the threshold of his career as a public man nearly thirty years ago. He dedicated all his time and talents to public causes, and quite properly, therefore, he was among those who urged that, as every labourer was worthy of his hire, members of Legislative bodies and other public workers should be paid reasonable salaries to keep them above want if there was to be sustained public work in the country. Except for a brief period of Presidentship of the Provincial Congress Committee and the Mayoralty of Madras, he never occupied pontifical 'roles perched in positions of dignity and authority. It was skirmishes, minor engagements, guerilla warfare that came his way and he was more like the leader of bands of men always in the rough and tumble of fight than the General of a big army. That is why though his name appeared in the newspapers more often perhaps than that of most people in the public eye, he never scaled to the heights of what is considered greatness. He was never, for instance, in any list that has been

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compiled of the ten greatest men of India. He did not secure a niche in the Valhalla of heroes whose biographies or speeches and writings have been compiled, nor have his portraits been on the market like those of many other 'National leaders' far less energetic and brilliant than he.

An unkind fate delayed the advent of Satyamurthi into this world by a decade or two. Born in an earlier generation, Satyamurthi with his cascades of fluent English speech and aggressive and challenging manner might have gone striding the political arena in the spacious days when Surendranath Banarjee and Lalmohan Ghose became the tribunes of the people. He might have been in deputations that periodically visited England, made that country and this reverberate with his great English eloquence and would have easily marched up to the Presidential Gadi of the Indian National Congress. But entering public life when Gandhiji loomed on the Indian horizon, spreading his message of non-co-operation and preaching the ideology that legislative bodies under British Rule were 'a snare and a delusion', Satyamurthi's special gifts found no congenial atmosphere for their full blossoming and fulfilment. Ever since 1921 Parliamentarianism has been at a discount and even the brief interlude of Congress Ministries for 27 months in several Provinces of India has not been more than in the nature of an experiment, the acceptance of a challenge, as it were, that popular leaders never flinched from accepting responsibility. But the spirit of Indian politics has to a large extent remained—so far as the mass mind was concerned—sceptical and cold regarding the value of scoring debating victories in the legislative bodies. Satyamurthi, the ardent Parliamentarian, found the 'times out of joint'. He was never in perfect accord with the prevailing ideology of non-co-operation, and eagerly waited to turn every opportunity that now and then presented itself to make the country more parliament-minded. It was thus that when Das and others started the 'Swarajist' party in 1922 Satyamurthi became an ardent propagandist for the new cause and, later, when the 1935 Act came into operation and the Congress contested elections, Satyamurthi threw himself heart and soul into the task of bringing about a re-orientation in Congress politics and rose to be the Deputy Leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislative Assembly, foregoing his chances to the Premiership of Madras, in loyal obedience to the behests of his party.

Satyamurthi ever loved a verbal fray and had mastered opposition tactics to a nicety. In this respect his spiritual affinities were more with the agitators for Irish Home Rule in the British Parliament under Parnell than with any other school of thought and action. His trenchant speeches

delivered in the best parliamentary manner, deliberate, devoid of needless rhetoric or sentiment, his incisive phrasings, his characterisations of members on Treasury Benches, his withering sarcasm, his quick repartee and flashing gibes, his fund of unabashed self-possession when parrying and thrusting interrupters and opponents made him the centre of interest in any Assembly and provided edification to thousands of newspaper readers in the country who loved to talk fiery arm-chair politics. No other member of our Legislatures ever used the question hour to greater purpose and with greater effect, exposing the vagaries of officialdom and turning the searchlight on many public grievances, big and small. Brilliance of form such as Satyamurthi possessed is not usually associated with hard industry and attention to details. But he was an exception and took to his duties with rare assiduity and devotion. His best role was as an opposition member, a role, by the way, that Dr. Besant had chosen for him in the early days of his public career when the mock Madras Parliament sat in the Gckhale Hall and Bills were debated and Acts were enacted drafted with all the punctilioseousness of real, serious Legislative enactments.

It was in 1918 that what had been practice games became a serious contest. The Provincial Conference that was held in May of that year in Conjeeveram proved a land-mark in the careers of four prominent people in India. Firstly, the Conference was presided over by Srimati Sarojini Devi—until then only a picturesque poetic personality who had never taken to serious politics. Secondly, it marked the entry of C. R. into provincial politics—and though he did not appear in the open session he played a prominent part in the Subjects Committee. He was the mystery of the Conference, with his black *alpaca* long coat and dark glasses, subjecting the innocent President and political stalwarts to many a moment of embarrassment by his points of order and mild but relentless cross-examination executed in the most unruffled manner. Thirdly, Dr. Besant who was then setting the pace of Indian political life by her Home Rule movement, and had reached the peak of popularity as the President of the Calcutta Congress in 1917, was then faced with stiff resistance, for the first time, at the hands of Satyamurthi and his group and the Conference marked the beginning of the decline of Dr. Besant's great influence in Indian political life. And fourthly, it ushered Satyamurthi as a doughty fighter against effete leadership, and as a powerful exponent of the rising temper of India.

For one who was still a tenderfoot in politics to oppose a veteran like Dr. Besant required no small temerity. But Satyamurthi never lacked

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such courage nor suffered from needless and untimely modesty. With C.R. to prompt his performances and load his missiles, he staggered the veterans of the old guard, who later retired one by one from the lime-light of the public life of South India, the later Tinnevelly Conference almost completing what the Conjeeveram Conference had begun.

The World War I was still on. The Declaration of August 1917 was not yet implemented—and Satyamurthi pressed for an Amendment expressing the dissatisfaction of the Indian public at this tardiness of the British Government, and making further support in the war conditional on an adequate and generous gesture from British rulers. Dr. Besant pleaded with noble eloquence that it was unworthy of India with her ancient dharma to resort to such bargaining in a moment of grave Imperial crisis. The Amendment came up before the open Conference and Satyamurthi piloted it with a forceful speech. They were still days of English eloquence in public life. When votes were taken by a show of hands, the House looked equally divided. Satyamurthi demanded a poll. And, strange to say, the poll revealed just an equal number on both sides! It was now for the President to give her casting vote, which she did in favour of Dr. Besant. Satyamurthi's Amendment was defeated. But he had scored his first signal triumph and made his *debut* on that day into 'first class' politics, as he himself recorded in one of his articles of a reminiscent character. Here was a stormy petrel indicative of the deep discontent raging in the bosoms of the Indian people. The politicians of the older generation could no longer rest in undisturbed security on their well-won laurels of a former day nor could the Justice Party, which had then come into existence, and loyally submitted to work Dyarchy for what it was worth to them, lull the country into the belief that popular ministries were taking the country along the road to progress, so long as Satyamurthi was there to raise his challenging voice.

In addition to his strenuous work as a critic of Dyarchy and communalism, and politics of the 'Liberal' variety, must be mentioned his deep interest in the cause of constitutional progress in the Indian States. Himself a native of Pudukottah, with which 'his relations were not of a pleasant character', as the Dewan of that State said the other day in ruling out a Condolence Resolution on his death in the Pudukottah Assembly recently, Satyamurthi had an intuitive grasp of the problems of Indian States' people, and longed to see responsible government established in them, with the Ruling Chiefs as constitutional monarchs. His faith in democracy was unbranded and he had no mental reservations about the fitness of people

in Indian States, as in British India, being able to manage their affairs, if given an unfettered opportunity to do so.

Satyamurthi's work in the cause of University Reform was equally noteworthy. He was a member of many University bodies and his seat in the Madras Legislature was on behalf of the registered graduates of the Madras University. The Annamalai University Act owes a great deal to him ; and if politics, which was his first love, had not absorbed so much of his attention, and put him into positions where 'his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against his', it is not unlikely he might have become the Vice-Chancellor of one or other of the South Indian Universities. He was, in any case, the great champion of the cause of under-graduates, and was their most popular hero on the public platform. He provided, indeed, the model to under-graduates in South India, for nearly a quarter of a century, in the matter of public speaking, and acquiring the appropriate parliamentary manner in their college debates.

Besides his Parliamentary, and University activities, Satyamurthi kept a busy round of engagements, going about the country and addressing innumerable public meetings. As a most effective and popular speaker in English as well as in Tamil, he was always in great demand not merely to do political propaganda, but to preside over anniversaries of associations, to deliver inaugural and valedictory addresses and to open conferences of various kinds. His interests were wide and varied ; he had always something worth saying, and said it in a manner worth listening to. Even those, therefore, who affected a superior air and were prone to treat with scorn his stagey and flamboyant manner and verbal pyrotechnics on the Madras beach - where public meetings were often held-- missed no opportunity, if even from a distance, to listen to his effective phrasings and enjoy his wide repertoire of general invective, chuckling in secret at his controversial powers. For when a good blow had to be struck, Satyamurthi could be trusted to deliver it effectively ; and those who would not or could not do it themselves liked to hear him humbling his opponents. When, however, he was in one of his irrepressible moods, not only did his opponents shrink before his resounding blows, but even 'comrades' in his own camp, cursed with extra sensitiveness, were kept wincing as his scorching phrases flew about in all directions.

Behind the impetuous restlessness that characterised Satyamurthi's life, he managed to maintain and preserve his deep interest in the more enduring satisfactions of art and literature ; and even amidst the eternal

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hustle and turmoil of political life he could live his tranquil moments of aesthetic enjoyment absorbed in drama or dance, literature or music. To those who knew him from the platform, he appeared forbidding, even austere, as though he would say with William Lloyd Garrison: "I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice: I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch,—*And I will be heard.*" But, in truth, he was very human and had his share of weakness for the good things of life, like scents and sandal-pastes, good dinners and fresh betel leaves and nuts—the manna of the Tamilian aesthete—and could relax himself occasionally *en rapport* with artistic and cultural expression in the manner of a born connoisseur, which, indeed, he was. He was a noted amateur actor, and took an active part in producing Sanskrit plays on the amateur stage, and his own Aswathaman in "Veni Samhara" is still a lively memory with those who have witnessed it. His love for Sanskrit and Tamil literatures was deep—and thus it was that he changed without much effort to Tamil eloquence when the transition had to be effected in the Gandhian era. He displayed his Brahminical caste-marks aggressively, if rather artistically, and flirted with the Sanatanist ideology of South India. This made him the *betenoir* of the Self-respecters and Justicites; but he seemed, indeed, to enjoy causing a flutter among them. Old world ideals and the claims of ancient Hindu culture always exercised a powerful fascination over him, and sometimes intrigued those who could not understand these streaks of conservatism in so flaming a radical. But while he might have opposed Sastry's Post-Puberty Marriage Bill early in his career, he never played a reactionary role in respect of the major reformist doctrines that were preached all over the country under congress aegis. Only, his was a powerful non-conformist temperament which would not be broken in into the main trend of Gandhiji's self-denying ordinances. Once at a public meeting in the early non-Co-operation days, when ascetic ideals made a wide appeal and were considered the essence of the new movement under Gandhiji's leadership, Satyamurthi was heckled for calling for and drinking in public a glass of aerated waters. Satyamurthi drew himself up to his full height, after calmly finishing the drink, and thundered out: "I am not an anaemic Swarajist: I am a full-blooded Swarajist." It was a question of temperament, and did not affect his political faith in Congress ideals. He stuck to the Congress through good report and evil with rare steadfastness: the Congress flag nailed to his mast was never once lowered. This great consistency and supreme loyalty must silence the mumurs of those who would like to be somewhat over-critical of his occasional personal intransigence, or of his supposed

traits of opportunism and hay-making while the Congress Sun shone.

A great patriot has passed away prematurely. That rousing and glamorous voice which enthralled hundreds of thousands is now hushed for ever amidst tragic circumstances, which make his whole life look like a tale of baffled glory. How one wishes he had been spared some years more to have been able to greet the dawn of Purna Swaraj breaking on the Indian horizon and lived to see the realisation of all his thoughts by day and dreams by night !

The Lost Hen

BY P. NARAYANA RAO

At the village Deity's shrine
There stood two men in a line,
Each praying to the deity
To view his case with pity.
The first prayed for 'Forgiveness,
Long life, health and happiness,
Sons, rains, and prosperity,
Reign of peace in the country ;
If you think all this airy,
Bless me and my family.'

The other praised the Deity
And hoped for more sympathy
And offered to sacrifice
A goat, if by her kindness,
(Which is all beyond man's ken.)
He recovered his lost hen.

When the first man heard it all,
He remarked at the proposal,
'Either you must be insane
Or too good for such bargain.'

'Let me first gain my lost hen
Then from it I know how best
To resile as said in jest.'

Such a spirit o' bargaining,
To coax God into yielding,
Seems in man as much ingrained
As t' resile when th' object's gained.

A New Landmark in Poetry

BY K. H. GANDHI

Some years ago, in a series of illuminating essays, Sri Aurobindo discussed the nature and evolution of poetry. As the most significant poetic trend in recent times he picked out the attempt to cast off the more externalised forms of expression and to seek for a pure and authentic intuitive language, to bring forth the living truths of the inmost spiritual being, to reveal its light and vision; not in the obscuring and encrusting speech of the surface mind, but in the inspired and revelatory accent of Spirit itself. This attempt has not always been successful. In continental and English poetry it has not gone beyond a search for some inner meaning of the sensational and emotional experience and its formulation in a new kind of intuitivised expression. A few Irish and Indian poets have been able to go further and have succeeded in giving utterance to a deeper psychic and spiritual feeling and vision in a more authentically intuitive language. The secret motive force behind all these attempts, the fundamental endeavour of the Time Spirit, as Sri Aurobindo calls it, has been to break open the doors of our luminous inner being and to express its truth, beauty and light in its own rhythmic terms. This secret urge, however, finds its full voice in only a few (not always well-known) poets; the rest find it difficult to cast off the old habits of poetic speech and either totally fail to respond to the urge or succeed only in making small beginnings.

All those who are acquainted with the recent poetry seeking this inward turn will not take long to find that a small book lately published—"The Secret Splendour"** by K. D. Sethna marks a more brilliant disclosure of the unfolding spirit and a greater mastery over its native tones than before. This book is all the more remarkable because the stamp of the pure intuitive word is evident, not in a few lines or a few poems here and there but in every poem: each line of it is pregnant with a subtle, luminous, intense inspiration which seems to come from some hidden depth or height of the being.

There are several ranges of our inner self, each with its characteristic movements, forms and forces which express themselves intuitively through poetry when an opening is made to them. Broadly speaking, we can say that our inner being is composed of three parts. Firstly, a luminous subliminal being behind each aspect of our surface personality—the inner mind, the inner vital and the subtle physical; secondly, an inmost

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psychic being or soul behind these inner parts; and thirdly, the higher planes of the spiritual consciousness posited in Yogic psychology above the mind-level. Most of the spiritual poetry so far has drawn its inspiration either from the luminous subliminal regions or from the psychic. There hardly exists any poetry derived from the spiritual planes above the mind except from their lowest levels. Poetry drawing its inspiration from this source has been termed by Sri Aurobindo "Overhead Poetry", and its highest characteristics are a language charged with a profound and vast sense of spiritual vision and experience, an intense absoluteness of expression that is sweepingly powerful yet perfectly poised, and an unfathomable rhythmic movement carrying with it overtones and undertones of luminous suggestion. To write "overhead" poetry is an extremely difficult thing, its highest pitch so difficult and rare that any poet successfully bringing or bearing its authentic inspiration would be worthy of a high status among poets and his work must be hailed as a new and momentous landmark in the history of poetic development. Though all the poems in this book are not derived from the "overhead" source yet there are a sufficient number of them which unmistakably embody the "overhead" inspiration and are surcharged with an intense and unfathomable spiritual feeling, vision and force not yet evident in the current poetic literature. This entitles Mr. Sethna to the rare distinction of an innovator in the field of poetry. In his work we confront the splendour of a new age of art.

The poet expresses his inspiration, overhead or otherwise, in many veins; sometimes in a strain of subtle suggestive delicacy as in

Intangible she glimmers
Through solitary night,
A nameless moonday weaving
Her body's deathless white

sometimes in an air of haunting exquisite mystery :

O halo of hair,
God's benediction on her mortal head,
Across my gloom ray down your tenderness !
O dream-cascade of splendour--to the quiet
Music of your faint falling I would die ;
Upon heart-soothing spirit cadences
Carry me over the dread verge of time !

But his power is more characteristically revealed in lines which suggest an atmosphere surcharged with a subtle luminous wideness and intensity and an amplitude of visionary force :

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The haunting rapture of the vast dream-wind
That blows, star-fragrant, from eternity,

or,

The hours go drunken with a honeyed hum
Of heartbeats round immortal fragrances
In a spirit wideness sown with spirit stars,

or else,

A light, a hush immense
Falls suddenly upon my voice of tears
Out of a sky whose each blue moment bears
The shining touch of that omnipotence.

This power reaches its height in various poems—in lines like

Your spirit in my spirit, deep in the deep,
Walled by a wizardry of shining sleep...

Make even my darkness a divine repose
One with thy nameless root, O mystic Rose...

An ageless God-delight embracing all
The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind...

Perhaps the most perfect example of the "overhead" style sustained in the topmost peaks is "Gnosis"—an extraordinary poem which has for its very theme the soar of the mystic consciousness, hushed and entranced, to those supreme heights :

No clamorous wing-waft knew the deeps of gold
An eagle lost in earth-forgetfulness,
Rising without one stir of dreamy feather,
Life gains the Unmeasured through a flame of sleep—
A love whose heart is white tranquillity
Upborne by vast surrender to this sun.
Flickering no longer with the cry of clay,
The distance-haunted fire of mystic mind
Embraces there its own eternal self—
Truth's burning core poised over the universe !

The compactness and high severity of the poet's speech is clearly noticeable in all his poems. He has a remarkable way of achieving the highest intensity by compressing not only a particular idea in a few words, but also various shades of significance in a single phrase. Mark the force of the following lines taken from different poems :

A loneliness of superhuman night...
One ample azure brimming every thirst...
A flaming crown of godhead over life...
A force drunk with its own infinitude...
Gigantic rapture rolling from within...

Mr. Sethna seems to be essentially a spiritual seeker. His primary aim is to aspire for a contact with the Divine and not to remain satisfied

with being merely a poet. To him his pursuit of poetry is justified only if it leads him further in his Godward aspiration. His "Ultima" expresses the idea beautifully :

If each delightful cadence
Mark not a flight to Thee,
My fancy's airiest radiance
Profanes its own mute core of mystery!

The same idea takes another form in "Exile" :

With you unseen, what shall my song adore ?
Though waves foam-garland all the saffron shore,
My music cannot mingle with their tone
Because a purer worship I have known :

and also in "Grace" :

Take all my shining hours from me,
But hang upon my quiet soul's
Pale brow your dream-kiss like a gem :
Let life fall stricken to its knee,
If unto lone-faced poverty
You give your blessing's diadem.
Make of these proud eyes beggar-bowls,
But only drop your smile in them.

The poet's approach to the Divine is through love but his love does not express itself in a profuse lyrical outburst. He prefers to express his emotion in a few significant words as he feels the utter futility of mere words :

With skill of mortal tongue how shall I phrase
A mirroring glory for her glorious face ?

Instead of indulging in "ineffectual words" he chooses to shape his love to a quiet consecration :

Needs must the soul express
Its thrilled response to her divinity ?
In silence 'twere more meet
• To touch with lips of fervour those earth-sojourning feet !

It is not that the poet lacks keen susceptibility to earth's beauty---

I was a devotee of splendid hush :
Silvery moonglobe's surf-awaking sleep,
Purple precipitous lone-brooding steep
Of massive hills where wind and water rush—

But this outward beauty does not satisfy his soul because in it

Always a rapture
Remains untold,
An infinite vista
No eyes behold.

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Dawn, noon, evening, night, all have a strong fascination for the poet and this he sometimes expresses in lines of extreme felicity :

How earth-strange on the ethereal way
Travels the first wing-carillon
A-tremble with the silver dawn
Ere rush of golden day :

or,

In cloud-suspense the faint breeze died ;
A deep glow spread on every side !
The firmamental hush came down,
A mirrored soul of aureate brown
Subduing each form-shade to one
Pervasive ecstasy of sun ;

or,

While the vague deepening silence falls immense
On eve's dim echoes of the sunken day
Ere the cold stars emerge.

But here too his enchantment with outward beauty lures him inward to the mystery of divine beauty. Under the spell of the dawn, for example, he feels :

The heart, a hovering consciousness,
Thrills on some paradisal verge
As if awakening to merge
With beauty sorrowless.

He invariably turns the outward facts of Nature into symbols of inward mystery ever present at the heart of things. Night, for which the poet has a peculiar attraction, becomes for him a sanctuary of the Spirit :

Night has a core
Sense never knows
Either through glow-worm wandering white
Or silver-calm tuberose.

it turns into a symbol of the spiritual silence which precedes the fullness of divine revelation :

The darkness is a miracle of death
Into mysterious God-life brimmed high
With dewy singlehood of earth and sky.

To understand Mr. Sethna's poetry we must go beyond mere intellectual judgment. We must receive its impact inwardly, by spiritual feeling. The thing to be appreciated is so subtle and occult at times that it escapes all attempts at analysis. This may create a certain difficulty for the reader, but no literary innovator makes facile reading. Mr. Sethna calls for a deep brooding attention on our part, no matter how brief his statement may be.

The smallest poem in the book is about the greatest living man on earth—Sri Aurobindo. Mr. Sethna has paid the highest possible tribute to this mighty soul in his profound, significant, highly-compressed vision-evoking manner:

All heaven's secrecy lit to one face
Crowning with calm the body's blinded cry--
A soul of upright splendour like the noon!

But only shadowless love can breathe this pure
Sun-blossom fragrant with eternity—
Eagles of rapture lifting, flickerless,
A golden trance wide-winged on golden air.

Lines like these are a fit offering to the Master, because they bear out Sri Aurobindo's own prophecy that the future poetry will shape its utterance in the language of a higher illumined and intuitive mind "swallowing up the intellectual tones into the closeness and identities of a supra-intellectual light and Ananda."

Reviews

The Political Philosophers since 1905, Vol. II, Part II. The Epoch of Neo-Democracy and Neo-Socialism (1929)—Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, M.A., Dr. h. c. Published by Motilal Banarsi Dass, Lahore. Rs. 12/-

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar has become a legend in his own lifetime,—so phenomenal have been his studies and writings on Sociology and kindred subjects. Anyone aware of the sheer quantity of his work is sure to feel a sense of awe at the sight of such energy and patient industry. English and Continental, no less than American and Asian fields of observation are before him when making those ample comments on the men and things which he is analysing or apprising.

The work under review is Vol. II of his "Political Philosophies since 1905". It covers the history and scans the face of the world even as his Volume I did. His definition of Political Philosophy is inclusive and comprehends every type of human endeavour and impulse to organization and conduct which arises, and disturbs, or shapes international polity. A distinctive approach fairly analytical, objective and realistic—with characteristic comments and style—already well known as Sarkarism—is present ever to add 'pep' and tone-quality to his writing. Whether he studies a purely economic or a political problem his knowledge of more than a few European languages helps him to ride like a colossus, who if he strides with heavy, conscious steps can still march sure to the end of his journey safe and well. It is an earlier and bulkier age which, therefore, is here on view rather than ours which is a more specialised, a more lightly-built one, more like fork-lightning than sheet. But Prof. Sarkar's help in summarising Reports, Books and positions makes the equivalent of whole libraries and political atlases available to students of the subject. His running commentaries have the assurance and vitality of an all-consuming all-seeing mind. A conclusion or comment may be contested here and there, as when he speaks about the classical school of Economists in England or on the Planners in America, Germany or Russia. He may give short shrift to other opinions than his own and claim priorities in wisdom as, for example, in connection with Sir M. Visvesvaraya's programme of planning, and refer endlessly to his own articles and books in more than one language. But his observations are full-blooded and come very much out of a mind well stocked with information. It is not usually prejudiced by any 'ism', nor narrowly loyal to any sectional or even national programmes: which, in a student of human affairs, is compensation for any or all smaller lacks.

His choice of 1905 as the starting year of study has been explained more than once by now for it was in that year that Asia emerged as a definite tendency if not even as a factor in world politics. Young Asia was born with a desire to hold Asia for the Asiatics; with Japan defeating Russia and rousing China, India, Turkey unmistakably in its wake. He takes the period between 1905—? through four stages, the third perhaps ending with the close of this war,—which he puts tentatively at 1945,—and the 4th running up to, say 1965, when the world will again gird up to and plunge

into the next global war with more ferocious combinations of powers to achieve more decisive results. He is sure that Asia will play no weak or uncertain part in such a conflict more as an equal than as a satellite or subject force; and that war will simply not stop with success but will in its turn sow seeds of much more destructive wars later, perhaps between the white and the non-white races of the world. It is in the nature of these wars to be incessant, and he knows human nature enough to prophesy no respite from them. Rather a depressing forecast this; but on evidence, true. The Asian Monroe doctrine, as he calls it, is as much a live reality to day as the American; as live as the deadly rivalries between the United Kingdom and Germany or Russia, Germany and England, *vis-a-vis* each other:—a term which like Acculturated, Albinocracy, Japanification etc., and a host of other foreign terms and polysyllabics is very dear to the writer.

The central theme of his political prophecy is that whatever forces may work in shaping the world process one thing is certain: Rival groups, imperialisms, if you will, with the efficient backing of every resource and influence which science, organization and political pressure can supply them will continue to work for world domination, (Realpolitik); expediency and interest guiding action rather than Thought, Reason, Ethics or Idealism. Every agency, economic, social, psychological, intellectual, technical or organisational will be used to further this real end; the actual motive may be camouflaged by facades of ideology, unfamiliar formalities and modes of behaviour, or by new political usance, but at root it will ever be interest, passion and power-lust of the major powers which now one, now another, singly or in groups strive to hold the rest of the world in thrall. And in this the Asian Powers like Japan and Turkey will no less have to be mistrusted than the European, the American or even the Russian communistic, States. He actually lists seven such Power-groups in the world. Any cry for peace or for outlawry of war, therefore, will be pious pretence or just a fond wish of the heart.

Prof. Sarkar renders real service when he calls attention to the circumstances that led, say, to the Russian and German Revolutions and asks us to note that all such movements are functions of national history, character and need and that essentially one type of organization is not wholly transferable to or to be imitated by another country. The distinctions he draws between fully adult, semi-adult and young nations, so far as technical and industrial ability is concerned, needs also to be borne in mind before one plunges into doctrine or rush to fray. If Prof. Sarkar has no illusions, it is not so much because he is not warm-hearted or generous enough, but because he sees all too clearly the dominant incurable persistence in human affairs of the Realpolitik factor, which, hagriding human fortunes has always controlled the destinies of nations. Either MacFlecknoe of the old *Nation and Atheneum* or some writer in *Punch* once remarked that what is needed is not so much a stabilisation of economies, of prices, wages, or currencies, or trade or employment simply which is needed to do the trick; but the stabilisation of the head of a Hitler, Stalin or Roosevelt with all that is within and behind it as dark spaces or light, engaged or in reserve. Whatever patterns of behaviour issue from the present war, it will but surely prepare the scale and character of the next, when the Furies will rage more hungrily than ever for blood and destruction. Power-politics,

REVIEWS

historical memories, and *revanche* will, for a good time yet, define the frame-work, set the direction, and settle the tone, temper and terms, of all other branches of existence and striving. Therefore, pure studies and theories of Economics, Ethics and Social organization are bound to be unreal if divorced from their immediate contexts, mere pastimes or exercises of the intellect unable either to direct or determine conduct.

Reviewing this volume is like reviewing the world ; and must be as imperfect a task. We observe here a skilled practitioner as he passes in critical review whole movements, sums up achievements, notes chronological sequences, assesses work and submits *ad interim* balance-sheets of assets and liabilities. If repetition and occasional pomposness or pedantry distract, that is a small failing ; for we are aware all along of our indebtedness to his work, which has done very much in India through English and Bengali to promote the collection and spread of valuable sociological information among his people these three-four decades at least. And our own tribute of regard goes to a scholar whose studies are frankly real and characterised by honesty, courage and love of truth.

V. SITARAMIAH.

Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum--
By C. Sivarama Murti, M. A., Curator, of the Archaeological Section,—
Bulletin of the Museum, New Series, Vol. IV,—Published by the Superintendent, Govt. Museum, Madras, Price Rs. 14--8--0.

This is a very welcome addition to the admirable series of publications which the authorities of the Museum at Madras have been able to bring out from time to time.

The Krishna Valley in the Madras Presidency was the seat of Buddhism at the beginning of the Christian era and the stupa at Amaravati near Guntur was the most glorious work of Art belonging to that period. Ever since this was discovered in the last years of the 18th century and made known to the public by Burgess through his treatise in 1887, it has attracted the attention of scholars all over the world. But by the time scholars began to take notice of the same very little had been left of the original structure and a good number of carved slabs abstracted from their original setting had been removed from the spot. Excavations were carried out by Mr. A. Rae, the then Superintendent of Archaeology in Madras in the years 1905--1908 and these yielded more interesting finds.

Scholars, both Indian and foreign, have since studied these relics and have made valuable contributions to the knowledge of the development of Buddhist Art in India. Mr. Sivarama Murti, than whom no better scholar could be thought of to do justice to this kind of work, has placed all lovers of Art under a deep debt of gratitude by bringing all the available material on the subject into one compass and presenting it in a systematic and scientific way with the results of his own investigations. Mr. Murti is a careful student of Archaeology and a very fine-artist in addition, a rare combination not usually met with among archaeologists. He has treated the subject exhaustively from various points of view and has enriched his publication with a number of good photographs and a set of beautiful sketches from his own hand.

The monograph begins with a historical introduction which includes a general description of the ancient town of Amaravati and its antiquities and the history of the Satavahana Kings. He then discusses the different schools of Buddhism found in the country at that time and furnishes a thesis on the nature and development of stupas in general. All this makes very interesting reading and shows the thoroughness with which Mr. Murti has gone into the subject.

Mr. Murti classifies the sculptures found at Amaravati into four periods—First period: 200—100 B.C., Second period: 100 A.D., Third period: 150 A.D., and Fourth period: 200—250 A.D.—every period showing its own type of human anatomy, dress, ornaments, poses and grouping and depicting successive stages of advance in technique and refinement. A general survey of the Art found at Amaravati is next given and his studies of the relics found reveal the cultural side of the people who lived in that age.

There are in all sixty-five plates to illustrate the Volume, thirteen of which are line drawings being sketches from his own hand and the rest photographs. To each one of these are added notes which are very illuminating and scholarly.

He has also made a careful study of inscriptions found there and has printed the text and translations of all of them with necessary appendices giving the names, both geographical and personal, together with a glossary of words that occur in them. A fairly long Bibliography and a very valuable index are added at the end which enhance the usefulness of the publication for students.

As the author says, the art traditions of the Satavahanas are great and are the result of the development of art all over the land for ages. To quote his own words: "The art of the sculptors of Amaravati, like all great art, is national rather than provincial. There is as great a link between the art at Amaravati about the first two centuries A.D. and contemporary art at Nasik or Kanheri, as between the earliest fragments from Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta and the Bharhut railing.....Just as centuries of stiff and rigid sculpture in Egypt, lacking in variety of pose and flexion, the rather rigid figures of Bharhut gradually shaped themselves into forms in innumerable *bhangas* with soft features full of grace....The sculptor at Amaravati was as much a peasant at heart as a courtier in his tastes...The Education of the sculptor in the Empire of the Satavahanas was not confined to the methods of chiselling. He was well-read in literature and knew well many of the allied arts...Amaravati art that continued and fostered earlier traditions, itself inspired later art. The Satavahana tradition is continued in the Chalukyan sculptures.....The traditions of Amaravati have travelled south and enriched Pallava Sculpture, and the art that was inspired by this travelled from here beyond the seas and determined the styles of sculptures far away in Java and other places."

Mr. Sivarama Murti deserves to be congratulated on the splendid manner in which he has dealt with the subject and for the quality of high scholarship and artistic sensibility which he has brought to bear in interpretation of it.

B. VENKOBA RAO.

REVIEWS

Women and Social Injustice. -By M. K. Gandhi, (Published by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Foreword by Amrit Kaur. Pages 276. Price Rs. 2/-.)

Gandhiji has tackled many a social and religious problem confronting the India of to-day both in his speeches and writings. And what he has to say about our women-folk--their disabilities and the remedies he suggests--deserves to be studied with respectful attention. For Gandhiji is a reformer and thinker in one. 'No man has evoked such whole-hearted devotion from women.' In response to his call, all classes of women in India came out of their seclusion at the time of Salt Satyagraha in 1930, to mention one instance, and many of them shamed the men-folk by their endurance and bravery.

Gandhiji approaches his problems, sociological or otherwise, with a keenness and perspicacity all his own. As he has so aptly said in one of his articles on child marriage: "We have many abuses in our midst, moral, social, economical and political. They require patient study, diligent research, delicate handling, accuracy of statement and clear thinking on them, and sober impartial judgment."

It is this 'scientific' outlook that heightens the value of his writings. We therefore welcome the present publication under review which contains a valuable foreword by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who is herself a stalwart and steadfast champion of the Woman's cause in India.

The themes in the several articles of the present work are no doubt very familiar to us. Gandhiji has spoken fearlessly about proper education for our women, against enforced widowhood, the purdah system, the dedication of girls to temples, prostitution, early marriage, the dowry system and several other social abuses created and sustained by so-called orthodoxy, priest-craft, superstition, ignorance, etc. In 96 articles that are brought together in this volume from Gandhiji's notes and articles originally written for "Young India" and "Harijan", we have his views on numerous problems affecting women, and his passionate plea for their equal status, expressed in his own simple and trenchant style.

"The ideal is to look upon marriage as a sacrament and, therefore, to lead a life of self-restraint in the married estate. Marriage in Hinduism is one of the four ashramas. In fact, the other three are based on it. But in modern times marriage has unfortunately come to be regarded purely as a physical union. The other three ashramas are all but non-existent." "It partly accounts for our weakness, indecision narrowness and helplessness. Let us then tear down the purdah with one mighty effort." . . . The awakening and emancipation of Indian woman-hood in modern times may be the result of the time spirit. But Gandhiji's campaigns on behalf of the 'suppressed' have embodied that spirit more than can be adequately estimated.

"It seems to me that we must test on the anvil of reason everything that is capable of being tested by it and reject that which does not satisfy it even though it may appear in an ancient garb." It is thus that Gandhiji has approached all problems and won against odds.

The publishers are to be congratulated on bringing out these classified volumes from Gandhiji's writings, which deserve the careful study of every one eager to see the ushering in of a new order in India and the World.

V. A.

1. *The Land and its problems* by ... By Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharya, Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs, No. 9, As. 4.

2. *Industrialisation*—By Mr. P. S. Lokanathan. Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs, Indian Branch, No. 10, As. 4.

The Oxford University Press deserves to be congratulated on bringing out useful and popular pamphlets like these on problems connected with India's economic advancement. Within a limited space, Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharya has given us an aeroplane survey of Indian Agriculture in his characteristic style. The influence of Indian Agriculture on India's social structure is next only to that of the Himalayas on her geography. Farming, as the Author puts it, is not a business but a tradition. "To own a field or acquire one is the aspiration which gilds the daily monotony of many a townman's life. Ploughing, sowing and harvesting are occasions of semi-religious significance."

The War has given an additional fillip to India's agricultural production. In the words of the author, "from the point of view of world production and supply of materials for the world's industries, India is one of the foremost countries to-day, and it is not at all unlikely that it will in the not distant future occupy the first rank. An example of what may happen is ready to hand. As recently as 1929, India in the matter of sugar was an importing country. It imported as much as a million tons of sugar from foreign countries, mainly Java, for its home consumption. To-day, and this position was reached five years ago, it not only produces all the sugar it needs, but has an exportable surplus."

The Indian ryot, the author makes it clear, is not as ignorant as he is generally represented to be. "Though often illiterate, he is certainly not deficient in shrewdness, in intelligence and practical wisdom. Through ages of inherited experience he has learned to appreciate the value of regular rotation of crops and knows that fertility of the soil cannot be maintained at the same level, if the same crop is taken too often in consecutive years." The author rightly refutes the view often held by the experts that the Indian soil has exhausted its fertility and consequently there should be progressive deterioration of the soil.

Mechanisation of Agriculture in a country like India is not desirable. "Machines are suitable for new countries with a sparse population and large farms such as Canada, Australia and Argentina, but not for a thickly populated country with small holdings. The serious effects of mechanical cultivation in displacing human labour and driving the peasantry into over-crowded towns should not be over-looked." It has to be insisted that technical progress is not a '*sine qua non*' of economic advancement. It is imperative that we realise that the aim of economic reconstruction in India should not be a creation of new zones of technical progress, but dissolution of the old zones of economic distress. It is gratifying to note that the author has not excluded any aspect of Indian agriculture in spite of the limitations of space. The book is suited to everybody's pocket and deserves to be in the pocket of everybody.

REVIEWS

2. *Industrialisation*—by Mr. Lokanathan—is a timely publication. The War has given an additional stimulus to industrial development; yet, as Mr. Lokanathan points out, there is not that whole-hearted encouragement and co-operation that circumstances justify. The dependence of India's industry on foreign sources of machinery, capital, equipment and even for spare parts is still a source of considerable weakness in her industrial organisation. From pins, screws and nails to engines and prime-movers, everything has to come from abroad. The lack of a strong metallurgical industry, and of subsidiary and auxiliary industries to cater to the needs of the established major industries, explains the weakness of Indian industrialisation. The total war orders placed in India were only Rs. 300 crores till the end of 1941 against Rs. 11,000 crores placed in Canada.

However much industrialisation is desirable, it is to be remembered that industrialisation is only a means to increased production, and thereby to the increased well-being of the people. This leads the author to take up the question of Cottage Industries and their role in the future economic structure of India. The fear that they will be swamped and ultimately destroyed by modern industry is perhaps groundless. Japanese experience shows that small industries can occupy an important place in modern industrial economy and can exist side by side with large scale industries. The relation between the two is partly competitive and partly complementary. Where they are competitive, it may be necessary, through a public organization, to demarcate the lines of division between the two. Where they are complementary there is less difficulty; indeed, some of the smaller industries would be auxiliary to large-scale industries. India, being in a transition stage, is eminently suited for carrying out this suggestion of the author.

The defects in the existing industrial organisation have been carefully surveyed and remedies suggested. Those who are anxious to see India an industrialised nation will do well to take note of the following :

Out of a population of 124 millions in the United States of America, President Roosevelt wrote in 1933, "American economic life was dominated by some 600 odd corporations, who controlled two-thirds of American industries and 10 million small business men divided the other third." In India this tendency has already become manifest in the cement, sugar, paper and steel industries. Protection in these industries has only set up syndicalist conspiracies to rob the public of the benefits of technical progress and economic efficiency. Do we want to widen this penumbra of economic servitude? Certainly not. Steps should be taken to prevent such results in India.

The book is neatly got up; well-written and is extremely interesting.

K. S. SRIKANTAN.

KANNADA

Kamana Solu—By A. N. Krishna Rao, Vasanta Granthamala, Bangalore.
Price Re. 1/-.

"Kamana Solu" is a collection of twelve stories written in Kannada. By Sri A. N. Krishna Rao, a popular writer, and published as the first book of the "Vasantha Granthamala" series, newly started.

The very first story is almost a fantasy with a realistic fore-part. A certain title-holder dies a much moturned death, after which he scuds over heaven. This heaven is presented to us as just a replica of the earth abounding in conflicting doctrines. Burlesque more than delicate humour marks the description. But the moral that one's own humble hut is happier than somebody else's mansion is well made out. In another story there is a lethargic, slovenly, and villainous tenant of a house. He lives as a parasite on his very young son who is forced to beg and earn food for the whole family. A tense situation develops but the conclusion is tame and disappointing.

The author displays now, and again great skill in portraying character. Gangavva, for example, is depicted as a lovely character embodying graceful woman-hood and some of the details set down add a touch of convincing realism, though occasionally, somewhat heavy and verbose patches by way of description impede the smooth flow of narration. Some of the stories are ill-finished and seem to be made up in haste. The sentimentality of stories like "Vanabhojana," where tears are far too common, gives evidence of early and amateurish effort.

In "Rev. Dr. Rangas" we have a fine story with an excellent finish. It has a worthy message hidden in it. It abounds in pathos as well as magnanimity of character.

In "Sahitya Sarvabhouma" people celebrate the memory of a dead poet (whose widow goes a-begging in the streets) by delivering grandiloquent speeches on his poetic talents. The satire is somewhat thick-laid.

The author yields a facile pen, though one wishes that more care had been exercised in the choice of expressions. Familiar expressions distorted to convey an unusual meaning, wrong compounding and archaic formations (for merely euphonic purposes) are some of the defects that one should see entirely avoided.

On the whole we have a readable book and some really interesting stories well-told in this collection.

H. N. K.

Gleanings

Two Great Indians

'Recluse' has the following in "A Bandra Diary" (*Indian Social Reformer of 20th March 1943*):

"The Bombay Law Journal for March contains a full report of the proceedings at the opening of the Kirtikar Law Library, presented by Mr. M. R. Jayakar to the Advocates' Association of Western India.

The gift has a significance exceeding the benefaction to the present and future generations of lawyers and students. It means that Mr. Jayakar, with many years before him for lucrative practice of his profession if he followed the common example, deliberately renounces the opportunity in order to devote himself to public service. This is in strict accord with the Hindu system of Ashramas which prescribes as the third stage in life the voluntary retirement from worldly activities.

The spirit which moved Mr. Jayakar is in the air and is moving others as well. I received a few days ago a pamphlet and a letter from the well-known industrialist and financier, Mr. Ram Krishna Dalmia, expounding his views on the ultimate causes of the present world situation and asking for suggestions for a movement which he is launching, to promote the spirit of brotherhood among men of all races, nations and religions. I met Mr. Dalmia casually once or twice at the late Sir Akbar Hydari's Bombay residence and, if he will pardon my saying so, thought of him as a man of business with no ideas outside cement and sugar and other enterprises. His letter opened my eyes to the fact that, amidst and behind his industrial and financial interests, Mr. Dalmia had a world outlook transcending all narrow limitations. "I feel," he writes, "that there is a great need for a revaluation of what we have hitherto considered to be unchanging verities and I intend launching a movement for universal brotherhood, with a movement to back it up from every corner of the world. I propose to name the organization 'ONE'. Though in working it out, difficulties, apparently insurmountable, will present themselves, there is nothing which cannot be accomplished with His blessings and guidance". Mr. Dalmia undertakes to arrange, if necessary, a sum of one or two crores of rupees and even more for the purpose of furthering the scheme. What is more, he intends devoting his time, energy and "even sacrifice this perishable body" to attain the goal. The grandeur of the idea and the earnestness of Mr. Dalmia, appealed to me with considerable intensity. "India", as I said in my reply, "is the land in which such a movement should originate, because it is in India that the quest after the Reality, the One behind the manifold phenomena, has been longest and most persistently pursued from ancient times." At the present time many voices are raised for the development of material ends by utilising the shadow prosperity created by the War. It is cheering to find one, himself an industrialist and financier, tell us that not the lack of material possessions but the starvation of our spiritual being is the cause of the present chaos

and carnage overwhelming humanity. Mr. Dalmia sees, as every thinker and writer on the present troubles does, that the root cause is the disproportionate development of machine power and the practical stagnation of the moral and spiritual elements in human life.

* * * * *

Uday Shankar's Shadow Play

In the February issue of the *Modern Review* Sri Harin Chattopadhyaya gives an interesting account of Uday Shankar's experiment :

Ramaleela was staged as a Shadow Play before a huge audience which numbered over twenty thousand.....Uday Shankar's name is as familiar all over this part of the country among the masses as though it were the name of one who was bringing back a lost light, the faded splendour of the gods, back to these Himalayan heights..... I felt that art, for the first time, while retaining its new inspiration was keeping pace with the modern tempo and standards of finish, was serving the purpose of filling the life of the people with rare colour and beauty, thus uplifting them from merely the religious sentiment to one of cultural progress.

A giant stage, which has evolved in three successive years in size and technical qualities, stood on 140 vertical shafts planted into the ground which slopes at a sharp gradient. With a total frontage of 60 feet and an effective opening of 45 feet, it gave a depth of 40 feet and a height varying from 45 in the front to 30 at the back.

Shanker had to put in, all told, about nine months' work to produce his two and a half hour play.

This form of shadow play is Shankar's invention, and, I believe, that it has a capacity all its own to produce such emotions as not the theatre nor even the cinema is capable of doing. It has only just been inaugurated.

.....There is something eternal about a shadow, there is something that grips the deepest vision in us when we come face to face with a shadow which is suggestive, all the time suggestive of the mighty drama set afloat by some hidden light behind. ... Shankar has done the country an immense national service not only by his dances but by this most important invention of the shadow play.

* * * * *

The Late Dr. Sukthankar

The passing away of Dr. Sukthankar is January so soon after the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute celebrated its Silver Jubilee, has been a grievous loss to the cause of Indian Scholarship. In the course of a biographical sketch in the *Bombay Chronicle*, P. V. R. writes :

"Dr. Sukthankar...was born on 4th May, 1887. After studying at the Maratha High School and the St. Xavier's College, he went to England for the I. C. S. examination, but did not succeed. A wiser Fate had ordained otherwise.....He was an M.A. of Cambridge and a Ph.D. of Berlin. ...On return from Europe he was for some time Assistant Superintendent of Archaeology in India, Western circle. ... The Bhandarkar Oriental Institute started, over twenty years ago, the project of publishing a critical

GLEANINGS

edition of the great national epic of India, the Mahabharata. It was a colossal undertaking. Western scholars had once thought of undertaking this great task, but had given it up. It was in the fitness of things that such a critical edition of an Indian epic should be prepared in India and under Indian auspices. In 1925 he was appointed the General Editor of the critical edition of the great epic based on hundreds of MSS. scattered throughout the length and breadth of India written in numerous scripts.

.....The first fasciculus of the Adiparva appeared in 1927 and it was hailed with a chorus of applause from all orientalists of the East and the West for the soundness of the method, the clarity and the succinctness with which the vast manuscript material was presented and the high critical acumen displayed. Since then, slowly but steadily, the whole of the Adi, Sabha, Vana, Virata and Udyoga 'parvans' have been published and collections of MSS. for the other 'parvans' have been almost completed."

Plea for a School of Indian Architecture

The *Hindu* (Feb. 2, 1943) publishes the following:

The establishment of a School of Indian Architecture under the auspices of the Calcutta University was recommended by a gathering of engineers held at the Engineering Club in Calcutta. Mr. H. P. Bhowmick, Chairman of the Bengal Centre of the Institution of Engineers, presided and various organisations of engineers were represented by their presidents and secretaries. The resolution urged that there should be facilities for undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate standards of study and that special importance should be given to the study of Indian architecture.

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR:
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'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature, and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

** * * * *

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To CONTRIBUTORS: Contributions are invited on all aspects of the modern Indian awakening specially in so far as they relate to the cultural life of India. English translations from outstanding writers in the different Indian languages are specially welcome. Contributions, however, should not exceed 3,000 words ordinarily.

..... *he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure!*

—THE SONG CELESTIAL



BY THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

PROGRESSIVE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

The Fourth Progressive Writers' Conference met in Bombay between 22nd and 26th May. It was a Conference of ardent spirits who desire to make Literature not the pastime of a coterie but a dynamic instrument to right social and political wrongs. A Progressive Writer was defined as 'one who had broken away or was trying to break away from the tradition of romanticist, purposeless writing.' Many of the leading figures in the Conference are, or were, members of the Communist Party to whom literary work is a means to definite ends—the creation of literature 'to fortify the will and morale of the people'. While the propagandist outlook of the 'Progressive Writers' is fully patent, there is no reason for those engaged in the creation of 'pure literature' to look upon the efforts of this dynamic group with a feeling of disdain. It may be that the crusading spirit and the knight-errantry implicit in the movement may throw up a few Don Quixotes, and some of the creations may be no more than journalism or polemic. It cannot be denied, however, that the main spirit of the writing of Progressive Writers is bound to act as a leaven, and, serve to mirror the struggles and the aspirations of a world weary with exploitation of various kinds. The Conference is an unmistakable sign of the times.

The Bombay Conference was attended by representatives of different language areas, and a noteworthy feature of the Conference was that it had sectional Presidents for the different linguistic groups present on the occasion. As the Conference had as its main motive the hitching of

literature to the mass mind, the articulation of the needs and aspirations of common people, prominence was properly given to contemporary efforts in Indian languages.

The Indian People's Theatre Association Conference was also held, and plays were staged in Marathi, English, Bengali and Hindustani. It is interesting to note that there was a "Festival of National Cultures." 'Chronicler,' writing in the *Bombay Chronicle*, describes the event in the following words:

"The Festival of National Cultures" may be described as the longest and perhaps the biggest variety revue ever staged in India. It lasted seven hours—from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.—and the total number of men and women and children who took part in it must have been over two hundred.

The producer—we mean P. C. Joshi—may well be proud of the distinctive achievement. The programme consisted of songs, choruses, ballads, dances, and dance dramas. The technique, in each case, was indigenous—ranging from the sing-song chorus of the fakirs of Eastern Bengal to the 'Burra Katha' and the 'Medicine-man' of Andhra and the gorgeous 'Ottam Thullal', the temple dance of Kerala.

The Communists, with characteristic thoroughness, have 'confiscated' all these popular art forms and changed their content. They have summoned the aid of the people's culture to influence the people. For the themes are all political, histrionics strung together on the "party line"! People's War, Congress-League Unity, Release the Leaders, Food Shortage, Soviet Union, Stalin. And however much one may disagree with the Communists' "party line"—as this writer does—one can have nothing but admiration for their efforts to revive traditional art forms of the people and use them for rousing the masses to action. The immediate objective may be political, but in the long run it must produce a much-needed renaissance of people's art and people's culture.

LITERATURE WITH A PURPOSE

"Breaking away from the tradition of romanticist and purposeless writing", which is said to be the distinguishing feature of a Progressive Writer, is an obvious protest against those who indulge in the theory of "art for art's sake", the self-complacent spinners and weavers of words

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supremely satisfied with giving expression to their own fancies, the professional and erudite litterateurs wedded to banal conventions and stereo-typed and inane embellishments of writing and the insincere effusions of obscurantists and reactionaries, Hoary traditions and conventions in writing probably sit more heavily on the Indian languages than they do elsewhere. But breaking away from "romanticist and purposeless" writing should not result in crudity and vulgarity. It has been said that the movement for freedom of worship in the West has tended to freedom from worship. Likewise it would be a calamity if freedom of literary expression should end in freedom from literary elegance. In one sense, there cannot be "purposeless" writing, strictly so-called. For, if nothing else, the writing has served the purpose of giving pleasure to the author and his friends. The progressive outlook is not the monopoly of the modern age. Great literary geniuses in every country who may be dubbed 'romanticist'—and therefore discredited today—tried to rise above the limitations of their own age and looked farther than their contemporaries. The spirit of freedom and of revolt against tyranny is inherent in human nature, and the writing of many an old writer is imbued with it, however inadequate its expression may be by modern standards. There are permanent values in life and literature, above the merely topical, the fleeting and the pressing contemporary 'causes' and 'problems' dealt with by 'modernist' writers. And these values have been embodied in the literary heritage from the past, which no one who cares for literature as the noblest expression of human thought and feeling may afford to ignore by labelling particular specimens of it as "purposeless." There is an enduring and a universal element in all great literature, both in its content and manner of expression, which nourishes even if it does not act as a stimulant not lead to immediate action.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, how the practical-minded thinkers of modern times have summarised the value of Literature. We take the following from Pandit Amarnath Jha's learned paper on "The Ideals of Literature":

A recent book, entitled Literature as Exploration, published by the Progressive Education Society for the Commission on Human Relations, sums up the operations of Literature as : (1) The Experience of Literature helps to develop the kind of imagination most needed in a democracy—the ability to understand the personality and needs of others and to envisage the possible effect of our own actions upon the lives of others. (2) Literature

acts also as one of the social agencies through which the culturally accepted images of behaviour, the constellations of emotional attitudes clustering about different relationships, and the culturally accepted social and moral standards, are transmitted. (3) In our heterogeneous democratic society, literature can enlighten the adolescent concerning the wide diversity of possible ways of life, possible patterns of relationship, and possible social and moral philosophies, from which he is free to choose. (4) Literature may also thus offer him a means of carrying on imaginatively some of the trial-and-error eliminations of patterns of behaviour necessary for a sound choice. (5) Literary experiences may help the reader to his own personality and problems objectively, and thus to understand and manage them better. (6) Through contact with the diversity of personalities and the varied experiences of his fellow-men expressed in literature, the adolescent reader may also be freed from the neurotic fears and the obsessions of guilt that often accompany the feeling that somehow he is unique and queer. (7) Literature may also suggest socially accepted channels of expression for emotional drives that might otherwise take an anti-social form.

THE ACADEMY IDEA:

Our note in the Sept-Dec. issue of 1942 on the Indian Academy of Arts and Letters was not intended to belittle the efforts of those who are enthusiastically engaged in educating public opinion in regard to the need for an All-India Academy. 'TRIVENI' was probably among the first Indian Journals to publish articles and discussions on the subject as early as 1933. No Indian who is proud of the past culture of India, and interested in the present Indian awakening that one sees in all Indian languages can be unsympathetic to the idea of such an Academy. And the TRIVENI claiming, as it does, to be the Journal of Indian Renaissance is keenly interested in such a proposal.

With regard to the functions of such an Academy, who should sponsor it, and when it may be fruitfully worked up, there is naturally divergence of opinion.

Meanwhile, Sri. D. Visweswara Rao of Andhra, who has taken upon himself the onerous task of interesting people in the subject, has plied us with several letters on the subject. He has sent us a note detailing the

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history of the 'movement' since Prof. J. H. Cousins first broached the subject over 20 years ago through circular letters and a questionnaire. After recounting the names of persons, periodicals and learned bodies that have supported the idea, the writer concludes with the following fervent appeal :

The Academy visualized by Prof. Cousins is the desideratum of every civilized nation in the world. Hence, the necessity for such an institution cannot be over-emphasized. Judging from the literary output of South India alone, such a "Supreme Intellectual Tribunal" is necessary to give impetus to the struggling poets and artists of that area, who are really famished for want of recognition and funds. Further, the intellectual achievement of each province should be made known to the other provinces. An All-India Body serves to encourage co-ordination between the different departments of study and creative activity. While making endeavours for the fructification of this ideal we should also try to requisition sufficient creative output which alone can win laurels in the Republic of Letters. Both of these efforts should run in mellifluous union like two rhymed lines. If India is to take her rightful place in the Commonwealth of Nations she must be able to have at her command a great means of artistic expression which will show the very glory of her soul to the world. The P.E.N. centre at Bombay has been working for some of the objects mentioned above for the last nine years and their success in this direction can best be utilized as spadework for any future Indian Academy; it is after all an Indian branch of an International Organization of Writers and hence its scope is limited. An Academy of Arts and Letters, established and run by Indians alone, can satisfy the need of the times and no coterie of writers or nucleus of a cultural organization can even temporarily usurp the place and functions of an august body like The Indian Academy. A great deal of preliminary spadework should be carried out and the considered views of the best intellects all over the country must be sought on the several aspects of the whole problem. Hence, I invite the attention of the great literary men, artists, scholars, thinkers and lovers of Indian Culture to pay whole-hearted attention to this movement, on the success of which depends the cultural integrity of our Country."

We have given above the appeal, which is the material portion of the communication received by us, without any alteration. The writer is a sincere enthusiast: but the creation of an august body like an Academy is not a matter that can be hustled. The plea made above suffers from some amount of loose thinking and is not happily worded. What are the Arts, for instance, to be included within the province of the future Academy besides Literature, and how? Again, how can any Academy 'requisition sufficient creative output?' The reference to the Indian P.E.N. is ungracious, to put it very mildly. We are not aware that any organization, least of all the Indian P.E.N., is trying to usurp the place and functions of the Indian Academy. We owe it to the organizing ability and the fine idealism of Madame Sophia Wadia that we have a fair amount of dissemination of knowledge of what is happening today in the Indian languages through the pages of the monthly *Indian P.E.N. Magazine*, for which those who are interested in the modern awakening in the Indian Literatures cannot be sufficiently grateful.

We feel (1) that the task of discovering and rewarding literary and artistic talent would more properly fall within the purview of provincial bodies, because every language area is sufficiently large, and centralisation of effort in this matter for a vast country like India is not feasible nor likely to give satisfaction; (2) that the present time is not quite propitious with its overwhelming anxieties, depression of spirit, and hopelessly divided counsels in political and other matters. What has been called 'spadework' would have to consist of getting leading intellectuals in the country to get interested in the matter, and persuading them to formulate proposals when the time is ripe. Till then all efforts may be devoted to the development of regional Academies for every language area and exploring means of promoting inter-provincial understanding and appreciation in cultural matters.

TEMPLE FESTIVALS

The big Temples, for which South India is justly famous, are not merely places of worship; they are active community centres. They do not at present, of course, fulfil the various needs of the community as centres of learning, as Assembly Halls, as Dispensaries, as Art Institutions etc. that they once used to do in the olden days. But even in the modern day they have helped to preserve, if only as a matter of form, some of the valuable traditions of Indian music and dance which form integral parts of Temple ritual. Thus, when a few decades ago, there was an anti-nautch

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movement, and the puritanical fervour of some reformers took the form of a crusade against nautch parties and threatened to extinguish dance-traditions in the country, these found an asylum in the temples, and the traditions survived. The annual festival or fair, or *jatra* celebrated in practically all temples, are occasions when the people of the locality and neighbouring regions have entertainment and recreation, buy and sell articles, and forget for a time the tedium of their humdrum lives. Foreign travellers have sometimes written about the commercial and trading instincts of the Indian people to utilise these religious fairs to great economic advantage.

It is true that at present we are passing through days of economic depression and there is little incentive to indulge in festivities of any kind. But it is for this very reason that occasions of public recreation are needed more than ever, so that the drabness of life, which it is the common lot of thousands to suffer, may be relieved to some extent on these rare occasions.

In recent times, owing to reasons of public health and apprehending the outbreak of epidemics etc., one hears of many temple festivals being banned or abandoned. Public health is a very important consideration and no one would think of demurring to a prohibition on this score. But where a temple festival is called off for other reasons, as on grounds of economy or because the money spent needs to be diverted to more urgent causes, one has to plead that it would be taking a very narrow view of public economy. The expenditure on account of a temple festival brings no return which can be measured in concrete terms, though even here the promotion of trade and commerce, stimulated by large congregations of men, is no negligible factor. But it enables thousands to get a wholesome respite and a little brightness and cheer so much needed in these hard days. This benefit, though intangible, is none the less real and contributes to social health. One hopes that this human consideration will make its due appeal to the authorities concerned, who in a moment of zeal for cutting down public 'waste' of money are prone to order the cancellation of Temple Festivals.

SONNETS OF THE SPIRIT

BY K. D. SETHNA

TYAGA

O vanished Face beyond the reach of thought !
Beauty the soul must love ere eyes can view !—
Shed lustre once again : have I not through
Forgetfulness of human faces sought,
Year on dark year, Thy memory divine ?
The old alchemic touch of peace renew :
Within my meditation's blinded hue
Thy aureate immortality enshrine !

Craving, O Vast, no lesser radiance,
I bare of all change-garb my reverie—
Pine-odorous sway, cloud-richnesses that rove,
Oceanic rapture's royal resonance !
Shall not my tranced sacrificial love,
Stripped of the universe, grow one with Thee ?

MUKTI

What deep dishonour that the soul should have
Its passion moulded by a moon of change
And all its massive purpose be a wave
Ruled by time's gilded glamours that estrange
Being from its true goal of motionless
Eternity ecstatic and alone,
Poised in calm plenitudes of consciousness—
A sea unheard where spume nor spray is blown !

Be still, oceanic heart, withdraw thy sense
From fickle lure of outward fulgencies.
Clasp not in vain the myriad earth to appease
The hunger of thy God-profundities :
Not there but in self-rapturous suspense
Of all desire is thy omnipotence !

BRAHMAN

Why need I fear to merge in Him my heart ?
Although the magic message of the moon
Be lost within Him, nor the starry rune
Nor day's rich rhapsody have counterpart,
He is no solitary blinded swoon
Of infinite forgetfulness, a void
Where every throb of colour is destroyed
For those who with His potency dare commune.

If not a star can ope its glimmering eye
And moon-rays wither and the sun grows black
When He absorbs the soul, it is not lack
Of light in Him ; but all this splendoured sky
Fades to a phantom shrivelled, shadowy,
Before the conflagration of His ecstasy !

AVATAR

"Who knows the travail of my earthward vow
The self-subdued descension of my powers
For thee, O man !—my daily death that dowers
Life with immortal relish ? Richly now
The rooted trance of my perfection flowers
Into strange-glowing rapturous agony
Of sacrificial fruit yearning to be
Plucked by the hungry hands of mortal hours !

Infinity was mine : enhaloed bliss :
Vistas of timeless truth ! And yet I bore
In my heart's pinnacled ecstatic core
A dream to join thy soul from the abyss.
Behold, at last I come thy love to gain—
Eternal music wearing lips of pain !"

Values in Life*

BY THE RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

I—From the false to the true

My audience today consists of the teachers and scholars in Universities. One could not wish for more enlightened listeners. Nor could one have listeners more difficult to please. It is best to begin by delimiting the topic. The title is taken from a famous scriptural text. The actual words are "Asato ma sadgamaya" Guide me from what is not to what is. The function of universities is exactly that—the journey with expert leaders from nescience to knowledge. The journey's end, if there be an end, can never be attained; the journey itself yields all the profit, and the pleasure and pain as well. Of universities, therefore, and similar bodies the need is perpetual. Neither the inculcation of knowledge nor its increase admits of stoppage or intermission. In vain is the cry of despair; no more books for mercy's sake, no more sitting at the feet of masters who often pretend to know and violently contradict one another. Isn't there a shortcut to salvation, some hypnotism or soul's opiate or talisman that will transport us straight? None. The flash of inspiration, the mystic vision is for the very, very few, if any. We must tread the hard and weary road, undergo the terrifying tests and weary connings for them. But at every stage and all the way there are compensations, the pleasures of intellectual conquest, the joys of discovery—ample reward for any toil and any tribulation. Go forward, then, and mind not the croakers.

From the false to the true. The saying is to be understood anagogically, on different levels. First, in the ethical sphere, where motive and merit or demerit in the ordinary sense are the measure. Then comes the historical and scientific sphere, where truth is or ought to be objective and disinterested. Thirdly, follows the philosophical or metaphysical level at which appearance and reality, phenomenon and noumenon engage our attention. Lastly, the Supreme and our relation thereto, with which theologians are for ever engrossed and by which they are for ever baffled. In this talk let us concern ourselves with the earliest of these stages,—truth and falsehood in social affairs and with their moral consequences.

Truthfulness has two aspects in practical life, not indeed logically separable, but sufficiently distinct to deserve separate treatment. It may

* These were three Radio Talks delivered to University Teachers and Scholars on 3rd and 24th May and 19th June 1942. They are published here with the kind permission of the All India Radio Madras.

VALUES IN LIFE

mean the observance of a vow, undertaking or promise. Or it may mean the utterance by speech, writing or signs of that which is, so that others learn the situation and respond with knowledge. A promise creates expectations and influences the conduct of others, so that failure is attended with inconvenience or dislocation in social relationships. Mutual trust is imperilled, and action based on calculation becomes difficult. The binding character of an undertaking, therefore, needs no emphasis. The habit of looking round carefully before incurring an obligation may, on occasions, seem unlovely and suspicious; but properly considered, it is a proof that fulfilment is intended. The man, on the contrary, who lightly takes a vow, is apt, when the consequences come into view, to repent and look round for excuses to get out of it. Those that manage clubs and societies are driven to tears when a considerable number of members fall into arrears and several swear at the bill collector. My experience in realising donations is particularly unfortunate. Friendships come under serious risks, and faith in human nature, even in educated human nature, is undermined. Some ceremonies include vows, which may escape notice at the time. Every attempt must be made to rouse the consciousness of the parties and their careful attention. Marriage vows and convocation vows are common examples. Purohits and parents will do well to apprise the parties of the new obligations, though they may seem trite. The bridegroom and the bride mumble the endless mantras in an unknown tongue and too often do not even mumble them. When graduates take degrees the Chancellor demands promises of deep and solemn import, but the unheeding candidates stand silent, and I have recently known occasions when a single 'I do promise' was not audible. Some remedy needs to be devised by which the impressiveness of a solemn moment may be utilised for giving a good turn to young lives. Sanyasa at an early age is by some authorities discountenanced on the ground that the nature and scope of the renunciations are beyond the comprehension of the neophyte. Other orders too prescribe vows of a stringent nature which the subsequent trials of life prove to be too burdensome. Many that enter with confidence become callous, but the finer spirits suffer anguish all their days because retreat is impossible. It was deep insight which prompted our ancient sages to test aspirants for long years and with severity before initiating them. I took the vows of the Servants of India Society when I had been teacher for twenty years. Still I constantly feel I fall short of their fulfilment in spirit. When young men fail, I commiserate more than censure. Money debts were at one time more sacred than they are. Nations have begun to

repudiate them, and the law provides various means of escape to individuals and corporations. What is originally meant to relieve the honest but unfortunate man becomes available to the unscrupulous and fraudulent debtor. Even among the peasantry of our land, the debts of one's parents were once honoured as a pious duty, but modern notions have grown dangerously lax, and repudiation of family obligations is a common incident in our courts. In respectable society collusion between father and son sometimes cheats the creditor of his just dues. The late C. R. Das made himself illustrious by paying his father's debts during many years of his own earning life. How one wishes that there were thousands and thousands more like him to revive an ancient code of honour which modern law has rendered obsolete! Even in the Ramayana it is worthy of note that Dasaratha's vows to his young wife were generally regarded as having been wrung from him by fraud and therefore not obligatory. His younger sons to the end maintained this belief; though they submitted to Sri Rama's iron will in this matter, they remained unconvinced. Sumitra and Sita recognised the high idealism of the hero.

We have still to treat of truth-speaking as distinguished from keeping faith. Myriad are the ways in which one may fall from rectitude and still escape detection. Often, alas! one does not suspect one's own lapse. A conscientious self-observer will convict himself many times a day of saying more or less than he meant, of misleading where he least intended harm, of suggesting thought or action to another that he should not have suggested. In some degree, slight it may be, we are all liars. And yet, if the name is applied to us, we feel insulted and are angry. This is the homage that we pay to this sovereign virtue. Unceasing vigilance must be exercised over one's self, one's slightest words and signs, lest a false suggestion be conveyed. But to our everlasting shame, human practice has consigned whole departments and categories of speech and writing to untruth. Testimonials and chits proclaim talents and virtues that do not exist. Commercial morality is hardly distinguishable from that of advertisements and propaganda. Income-tax returns are only an extreme instance of the general inaccuracy and unreliability of a whole class of information. The ages recorded by officials at the time of employment are false in eighty out of a hundred cases. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore, in ordering that the correct figures should be given in twelve months, has shown characteristic courage and enterprise. The language of courtesy, hospitality and formal social intercourse is debased in value by much that is not meant to be believed and that is not believed.

VALUES IN LIFE

As agents and spokesmen of Government or of political parties, men ~~and~~ women will make themselves responsible for ambiguities and evasions which they will scorn in private or personal life. In courts, which are temples of justice and truth, it takes the acutest and wisest men to discover them. Life is hard, life's demands are inexorable ; temptations, pitfalls, snares, incitements to sin abound on all sides. Apostles of truth, like Mill and Morley, and other great teachers and law-givers, have found it necessary to provide exceptions, however few and guarded, to the rule of truthfulness. Even Rama could not do without white lies. Some simple-minded and straight-forward commentators absolve Rama on the ground of merrymaking or other such motive. But other commentators torture Valmiki's text and produce fantastic meanings in order to save his character from imputation of the slightest peccadillo. This is a true case of hypertrophy of pietism. The empire of truth, however, is totalitarian, it tolerates no reservations, it cannot allow exceptions. The experience of judges and legislators has found it necessary to demand of the most ignorant as well as of the most subtle witness the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Anything less opens the door wide to corruption. In highly evolved society no person should ask 'How am I bound in these circumstances to tell the truth ? If a lie will avert so much evil, why may I not tell it ?'

II—From Darkness to Light

From Darkness to Light is one of the most trite but one of the most pregnant metaphors in language. Places of learning are devoted to the dispelling of darkness and the spreading of light. It is their high function ceaselessly to increase our knowledge and make it more and more certain. Universities make the world more familiar everyday and therefore more friendly to man. We fear nature less and less. " *Vidwan na bibheti kada-ca na*" the enlightened man has no fear from any quarter. But he must be fully enlightened. He must be master of human experience—religion, history, science. Imperfection in knowledge, error, superstition, from these he must be emancipated. Alchemy, astrology, magic, miracle-mongering must not tempt him from the royal road to knowledge. The human mind is subject to two opposite tendencies, which require to be rigidly controlled, if they are not to paralyse and wreck each other. The balance between them is at all times difficult to attain and often impracticable. They are the instincts to believe and to question. Credulity and scepticism, faith and reason are perceptually opposed to each other, but fated to operate on the same brain. No man is wholly devoid of either faculty,

though some have a strong dose of the one and some of the other. Their relative influence too varies from time to time in the same man, and not merely from time to time, but from department of knowledge to department of knowledge. I have known lawyers, accustomed to weigh the evidence of witnesses and documents in the most rigid of scales, but ready to swallow the most extravagant stories of seances, communications from the dead and spiritualistic phenomena. On the contrary, some people who subject these phenomena to exacting proofs fall easy victims to cheats, impostors and company promoters. The man is rare, one in a million, who strikes the just medium, both in human affairs and natural phenomena between caution on the one hand and receptivity on the other. To be

reckoned among good-natured and lovable men, one must have a certain amount of trustfulness in dealings with others, a fixed disposition to believe good of others till they are proved unworthy and to give them further chances even after that limit. The right question to ask when your help or sympathy is sought in that sphere is, 'why not?' To ask, 'why should I?' would be to betray undue harshness of judgment, if not heartlessness. In matters of scientific interest, on the contrary, where not generosity or charity is concerned, but truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, where, for instance, a so-called miracle or marvel is put forward for acceptance, it is right to insist on the evidence being produced, sifted and analysed without reference to the personalities concerned. If a trustworthy friend attests the phenomenon and is prepared to pledge his honour for its accuracy, it may incline you to make investigation, but cannot justify any relaxation in the standard of demonstration required to establish a natural phenomenon. 'Why?' represents the correct attitude of mind, not Why not? That the phenomenon did in point of fact occur as it is alleged to have occurred must be proved. You must not undertake to prove that it could not have occurred as it is alleged to have occurred. And yet many highly educated persons yield their credence to miracles just because it is not possible there and then to prove a negative.

The opposition between these attitudes of mind, viewed in a general way, may be described as the opposition between faith and reason, faith being the attitude belauded by religion and reason the attitude championed by science. That reason is not an unfailing guide, that it is in certain circumstances impotent to discover truth must be acknowledged. Many facts have yet to be explained by reason. Nevertheless, reason has faith in itself to this extent that, as science advances, such facts will receive

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satisfactory explanation from natural laws. No one who surveys the state of human knowledge from time to time, beginning from our primitive days, can hold that the triumphs of reason are over, or that in the centuries in front of us many phenomena which now perplex the scientist will not yield up their secret. Our vedic philosophers long ago laid down that faith begins where reason ends. It follows that the province of faith is subject to unceasing encroachment by science. Faith claims that it can remove mountains. If this means that in the sphere of human endeavour deeds at first regarded as impossible have actually been accomplished, it is a tribute to the power of hope and persistence which reason need not grudge. But when a certain Hindu prince of the last century caused Ganges water to be sprinkled all round his fort by pious Brahmins and trusted the infidel army to be stayed outside the hallowed line, or when in my own recent experience a holy ascetic fasted and kept vigil and intoned the Gayatri for weeks together in the confident hope that the Viceroy would not give his assent to the Child Marriage Restraint Bill, they gave proof of magnificent but unavailing faith. Faith of that type governed human conduct much more in the old days, but we shall see it contracting its operation rapidly in future.

Science and scientists are accused today of abusing their knowledge and the power of their knowledge. They seem likely to destroy the very civilisation that nurtured them. The wealthy classes, the trading classes, the manufacturing classes, the publicising classes, the governing classes all have bent their energies to the work of destruction. Why scientists should be singled out for execration has always puzzled me. Do not historians falsify contemporary records before our eyes? Do not literary men write flagrantly one-sided books for propaganda purposes? Do not eloquent men stir up anti-social passions? Will the State allow the men of science alone the freedom to choose how and how far they will help its projects? What would the British House of Commons say if the laboratories in the Universities had been shut up and the services of inventors and ingenious craftsmen had been denied to war-work? If war is inhuman and a crime against our kind, we are all alike to blame, for we all join in it, we all give our best to its successful prosecution. It is unreasonable to expect the votaries of science to cultivate an exalted morality of their own, cut off from the other professions which are tributaries to the welfare of society.

A word or two about the spirit of scientific and historical research and teaching. The essential condition is to shake off the bondage of

prejudice and prepossession and to follow where the light leads. Violence may have to be done to pet theories, to social and communal traditions, to national pride, and to the practices and beliefs of consecrated churches and holy orders. On the altar of truth all these possessions, material and immaterial, must be sacrificed, if need be. It will cost us much anguish of the soul. But the cause is worth it and more. For as the years roll on and other generations come up, a new and better world order will arise, a higher polity will evolve, and what we sacrifice with grief to-day will be replaced by institutions and practices and beliefs more in consonance with truth and more serviceable to the requirements of that time.

III—From the Fragments to the Whole

The title this time is *From the Fragments to the Whole*, and our business is to put the highest possible meaning upon it. To make our task easy, we shall begin by an illustration on the ordinary level. Take a Hindu joint family. At a given moment it consists of a certain set of members. But these members change from time to time, some dropping out, others coming in. The family in its compound character continues with property, rights and obligations in law of its own, and a certain place of its own in society. For many important purposes it is an entity by itself and may be considered to have a significance, independent of its components. This is not to be taken as meaning that the joint family is immortal or that, if all its members were dead, it would still live and function in society as an organism. Nevertheless, there is a sense, limited no doubt but real, in which it has an existence apart from, and independent of, the existence of the individuals composing it. The question may conceivably be asked: Is the joint family only the sum total of its constituents or is there an element in it over and above the aggregate? Most persons would answer this question in the negative. But take the State as distinguished from its citizens or subjects. A similar question in that case is not so easily answered. Some authorities maintain that the State is a reality for all purposes transcending its citizens or subjects, while others cannot see anything left in it, if the property, territory, rights and obligations of its separate citizens or corporations of its citizens were subtracted or extinguished. These different views lead to startlingly different results in the practical demarcation of the authority of the State over those whom it controls. Going farther in the same direction, we encounter the problem of man. Is he just his limbs, blood, brain, feelings, tendencies, qualities compounded together, or is there anything of him that will remain over after all these component parts, material and immaterial, are abstracted

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away in thought? A school of scientists, not so numerous as it may seem, asserts that, when an individual is buried or cremated, nothing of him or her is left except his or her memory and influence. The immense majority of mankind, however, have believed and will continue to believe in an individual soul, surviving after the body has perished, and, in some manner not clearly known to us, experiencing the consequences of its earthly life. This existence and experience after death is in most religions described as the real life of the soul in comparison with which the life on earth is a brief episode. Though this after-life is hidden and wholly unascertainable, it is easy to see how, if it exist in reality, we are not employing a mere figure of speech in calling it the future life. Hinduism elaborates a theory of rebirth, according to which the soul of man or indeed of any form of life returns a countless number of times to function on earth, being indeed caught in the ever-revolving wheel of *samsara*, from which release is possible only to the purified and blessed.

What is this world or *prapanga*, this objective universe or nature, in which our lot is cast during life? Growth and decay are its characteristics. It is under an inexorable law of change. Not only what we see and handle, not only what we don't see, as the air, but feel, but abstract things like desires, qualities and thoughts, institutions like law, caste, dharma, justice, religion—all are subject to change. Now the ever changing, the unstable, the fleeting is not to be depended on. We ought not to fix our affections on what may betray us, we ought not to seek that which ever eludes grasp, and, if grasped, soon ceases to be attractive. In other words, these have no value and are unsubstantial, shadowy, unreal. Nor is this an exaggeration. Unreality besets all nature. What do we know of an orange, so delectable to the taste and, as the doctors say, so wholesome to the body? Colour, weight, taste, assimilability, cheapness, these are attributes all liable to change and deterioration to the extent of converting the orange into a piece of useless and even noxious matter. Supposing, however, these attributes remained permanent and immutable to you, are you sure they are precisely the same to me? I may be colour-blind, I may have fever and it may taste different to me, my nerves may be tired and it may seem disgusting to me, and its chemical and physiological reactions on my system may be very dissimilar to those on yours. In the case of a non-human, an orange may prove highly injurious. You and I and the non-human know of the orange only through our senses and as it affects those senses. Of its real nature we are wholly ignorant. Of the orange as it is in itself, we cannot know anything. What we affirm of the orange

is its appearance or behaviour, not its reality. That is, our knowledge of the orange and indeed of the world is phenomenal, not noumenal. The noumenon or reality is shrouded from us. What is seen and felt and thought about is unreal. The real cannot be seen, felt or thought about. That is a strange result of this speculation.

Let us pass on to the next stage. Is there a reality behind all this appearance or not? Some say no but many say yes. Even these latter can just affirm the existence of this reality and do no more. They are not agreed whether this reality is diverse as the appearance is diverse, or single. Now the human mind cannot rest in contentment at any point. It will not cease to worry and speculate because certain knowledge is impossible. When reason fails, it falls back on faith or intuition. Scientific proof, so runs the argument, is not the only guarantee of truth. Why is the faculty of faith given to us? If you say faith fluctuates and witnesses to unintelligible and contradictory things, you are bidden to be patient and modest. Look at the vast body of genuine evidence recorded by the holy and virtuous men and women that have gone before us. Then there is scripture, Revelation, the word. What may not be understood may be worshipped and prayed to. This *prapanca* is not merely the sum of its fragments, though these are the only objects of our finite faculties. There is a Whole which comprehends its bewildering variety and is the Universal Soul giving it coherence and significance. This Universal Soul, Scripture declares, not only contains the universe but extends beyond it. Which is a way of saying that it is not merely the aggregate of its parts, but an entity in and by itself, surviving the destruction or *pralaya* of the fragments. In fact, it is the only Reality—eternal, changeless, indestructible. The individual soul, when it is about to be liberated, can attain to knowledge of the Universal Soul or Brahman. But let not the word 'knowledge' deceive you. It does not mean ordinary cognition by the brain. It is called in Sanskrit *Sakshatkara*—translated into English, it would be integrated experience. That is the final liberation from the bondage of *samsara*,—no more birth and death. When *samsara* began or how it is impossible to say. Nor has it an end to the ordinary individual soul. That fortune is reached only by the one in a million who receives the grace of the supreme. From the fragments to the whole, then, is a journey, long, arduous, and labyrinthine, but seldom successful.

The Recovery of the Devaram Hymns

By S. R. BALASUBRAHMANYAN, M.A., L.T., Chidambaram

Tirunaraiyur is now an obscure village about twelve miles west on the road from Chidambaram to Kattu-Mannarkoil. But this village was the home of one of the greatest figures of mediaeval Saivite lore, Nambi Andar Nambi, who is said to have recovered, at the request of the Chola king, Rajaraja Abhaya Kula-Sekhara, the Saivite canons of the three famous Devaram hymnists.



Dakshinamurthi, Tirunaraiyur.

Rajaraja I (acc. 985 A.D.) was an ardent follower of the Saivite faith. He belonged to a family devoted to the Lord of Dance (Adavallan) at Chidambaram. He had the surname Sivapadasekhara and naturally his interest in Saivite canon was very great. Though there is epigraphical evidence making provision for singing Devaram hymns even during the Pallava age, the King found that in his days the hymns of the three chief Nayanmars were not available and he conceived such a passion for them

that he strained every nerve to secure them. Umapathi-Sivachariyar, who has recorded in verse this story of the recovery and redaction of the chief Saivite canons in his work **Thirumurai Kanda Puranam**, calls the King Rajaraja Abhaya Kulasekhara, a devotee of the Thyagesa of Tiruvarur. The King was filled with despair when his search proved futile. Then he heard of the great miracles wrought by the great saint of Tirunaraiyur, Nambi Andar Nambi.

It is said that Nambi's father was a priest of Pollappillaiyar of Tirunaraiyur in Sonadu (now in South Arcot District). One day the father, who had to be absent at a neighbouring village, commissioned his son to depurate for him. The boy carried out his father's instructions, had the God bathed, and then he placed the rice offerings before Him; and when he found that the Pillaiyar did not respond, the boy in vexation was about to knock his head against stone. Suddenly the God stopped him and ate all the offerings as desired. Then the boy said that it was late for the school and he feared the teacher would scold him for his late coming and so he requested the Lord to teach him his lessons. The Lord did so. The next day, the same course was repeated. Lo! The whole world wondered.

The miracle reached the ears of the Chola King when he was in straits over the Devaram hymns. And the King at once resolved to go to Tirunaraiyur. So he did; and when he came, he brought large quantities of varied offerings of fruits and cakes. At the request of the King, these huge gifts were offered to the Pillaiyar and they were duly accepted. The King was greatly delighted and thereupon made known to Nambi his quest for the Devaram hymns of the Trio (three saints—Sambandar, Appar, and Sundaram). Nambi prayed to his Pillaiyar and he revealed to his disciple that they would be found deposited in a room in the backside of the Hall of the Lord of Dance at Chidambaram with the seal of their palms impressed on the door. Then the king accompanied by Nambi went to Chidambaram and told the men of Vedic Lore what had been revealed to them. The temple authorities then declared that the room would open only if those who set the seal came back. Upon this, the King conducted a festival for Nataraja, took the idols of the Tamil Trio in procession round the temple and stationed them in front of the room to the west of the Hall of Dance of the Lord. The seals were noticed and the sealed room was opened. A heap of cadjan leaves swallowed mostly by white ants was found. They poured oil over the heap and recovered the surviving leaves. The King's distress was beyond words to find such a large-scale destruction of the holy texts. Then a divine voice from on high told him that there

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were in it whatever was needed for his age and this gave the king some relief. Then Nambi had them collected and arranged. The hymns of the Trio formed the first seven, out of the twelve books of the canon of the Saivites.

It was a glorious day in the history of Chidambaram—a day only next in importance to that on which the Nataraja cult was instituted and the Lord did His Dance divine to grant grace to His devotees. At one bound, the Chidambaram temple became the temple of temples of the Saivites (*Koyil*)—the very hub of their religious life. Nambi's redaction of the Saivite canon made this place the pivot of the whole religious system. How proud was Sivapada Sekhara! How large this place loomed in the life of the princes and peoples of the land!

Creepers of Aspiration

(After Sri Aurobindo's Darshan)

BY D. R. BENDRE, M.A., Dharwar

(Rendered by the author from his Kannada poem)

Arise Creepers of Aspiration, bloom
From the inmost heart
To the utmost doom;
Let the movement start
From the Sun up to the Moon,
Oh! grant us the boon!
Let all of us be what we are—
Not specks of dust, nor odours fine
But stars of Grace Divine.
And the call comes from afar,—
"Arise, Children of the Sun, Arise
For the mother pours her blessings
From her living lustrous eyes."

Walt Whitman—A Study

BY P. SAMA RAO, R.A., B.L., Bellary

“Of Life immense in passion, pulse and power,—
Cheerful, for freest action, form'd under the Laws divine,
Of modern Man I sing.” —*The Song of Life.*

I

In estimating the poet's art one must take into consideration the substance of his message as well as the craft with which he dresses it. The beauty of the *sirish* flower is heightened by its bed of luxurious tender foliage. “How much the poetry spends upon the nice inflections of rhythm alone may be proved,” as Montogomery says. The rhythm of substance decked in the rhythmic garb is the charming Angel of divinity who ministers joy for ever

The poetic being of an artist has two sides ; the intellectual and the emotional. They are closely allied and are interdependent for his art. One without the other cannot endure and is not productive of the right appeal. The vigorous intellectual logic that connects cause and effect in the world of physical nature marks out the scientist; but something more than that is required of a poet. In our daily experience with the world our chief interest is not in things as they are but with their emotive value. In the words of Hudson,

“Though the mystery and beauty of the world are habitually recognised by us, they are recognised for the most part only in a vague and sluggish way. There are, however, moods of heightened feeling in which they come to us with special vividness and power. It is then that we are deeply stirred to delight or wonder, to gratitude or reverent awe. Out of such moods poetry springs ; to such moods it addresses itself. It reports to us of things from their emotional and spiritual sides. It expresses and interprets their appeal to us, and our response to them. It is thus at once the antithesis and the compliment of science.”

Thus poetry begins where matter of fact or science ceases to be merely such, and to exhibit a further truth, the connection it has with the world of emotion and its power to produce imaginative pleasure. Hence the interpretations of the physical universe by a scientist do not give us that intimate sense of objects as the interpretations of poetry give; the former appeal only to the limited faculty of man and not to the whole man. It is not Cavendish or Thompson who can hit off the true sense of animals, or water or plants, and make us participate in their life; it is Shakespeare with his

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".....daffodils
That come before the swallow dares and take
The winds of March with beauty;"

and Keats with his

"Moving waters at their priest-like task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores;"

that ennable life and endow it with lasting fragrance.

II

The first thought that crosses one's mind after a dip into the slender *Leaves of Grass* is that the poet is concerned not so much with a description of nature for its own sake as he is with the emotions that are kindled by it in his breast. Nature is but a back-ground for the interpretation of Man. His definition of Nature does not stop with the vegetable and animal kingdoms but extends to that of the human. It is to the latter that he always addresses himself, not because the human world is in any way superior to the other worlds, but only with that usual child's curiosity which gapes with wonder at every face he passes by. His primary emotions centre round human beings and attune themselves to their joys and sorrows. This identity reaches such a climax that one is confronted with a doubt whether there existed a similar being ever before. But his partiality and love for the human world is not an exclusive passion with him. A glorious sunrise or sundown, the smiling gaiety of spring-flowers and the half-mystic, half-coquettish tripping of a village girl, move him to the same extent as a vociferous congregation of mortals crying for liberty or redemption. His love for all kinds of life flows out with the same ease and spontaneity as the mountain breeze. The vehemence in his poems is the outcome not of his passions but of his soul-force. "There was always something about him of the imperturbable confidence, the unsoiled freshness of nature; his face had caught the good gigantic smile of the brown old earth." He had that sturdy independence which always characterised a deeply religious soul. He looked on none as superior to himself except the One to whom he owed the very breath of existence. So he drew his inspiration—as Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth did—not from his predecessor poets but from Nature herself in her rebellious form of the sea;

"O Sea! . . . All these I would gladly barter
Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer
Or breathe one breath of yours upon my verse
And leave its odour there."

This spirit of his can be justified when we ponder over the fact that he always approached the primitive sources of inspiration as no other poet has so devotedly done. Though he recognises poetry and romance as treasure houses of beauty and the wisdom of the past, yet he finally trusts in what he declares,

"A morning glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books." —*Song of Myself.*

He mystifies himself occasionally. He has subscribed himself often to the faith that he like all creatures is fast and intimately connected with one another in the divine mosaic of creation. He lays down the *samatva* of God's religion preached in the Gita. He thinks himself the mightiest of the mightiest and would touch his hat to no one, although his heart overflowed with the zest of camaraderie. For he sings in his *Song of Joys*:

"O the joy of a manly selfhood !
To be servile to none, to defer to none, not to any
tyrant known or unknown,
To walk with erect carriage, a step springy and elastic
To look with calm gaze or with a flashing eye,
To speak with a full and sonorous voice out of a broad chest,
To confront with your personality all the other
personalities of the earth." —*Song of Joys.*

That is why he is often struck with remorse when he sees servility in the human kingdom. He ardently practises what he heroically expresses. This is the secret of his appreciation of animals :

"I think I can turn and live with animals, they are
so placid and self-contained ;
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat or whine about their condition ;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins ;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God ;
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the
mania of owning things ;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived
thousands of years ago ;
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth."

—*Song of Myself.*

Therefore the very first lesson he would teach mankind is to convince them of their potential greatness :

"They must learn to put from them all cringing to what is outside them and stand erect, self-possessed, reverencing, even glorying in the divine in their own natures."

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Thus we see he has nothing to do with the religion that advocates self-abasement. He is deeply religious with all that. He dreams of the God-head:

“I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand
God not in the least,
Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful
than myself.

“In the faces of men and women I see God and in my own
face in the glass,
I find letters of God dropt in the street and every one
is signed by God’s name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that
wheresoever I go
Others will punctually come for ever and ever.”

—*Song of Myself.*

This is his theory of evolution, not quite foreign to the Hindu. Having thus prescribed a course of conduct best suited for man, Whitman goes on to describe the form of worship that is to be laid at the feet of the Almighty. He agrees with Tagore and declares that the body is often the expression of the soul. Worship of God according to him must begin by reverencing the divine in one’s self, and recognising that nothing is essentially common or unclean. He interrogates to himself:

“Was somebody asking to see the soul ?
See your own shape and countenance, persons,
substances, beasts, the trees, the running brooks,
the rocks, and sands,
All hold spiritual joys and afterwards loosen them ;
How can the real body die and be buried ?

* * * * *

Behold, the body includes and is the meaning, the main
concern, and includes and is the soul ;”

—*Starting from Paumanok.*

and answers himself :

“Clear and sweet is my soul and clear and sweet is all
that is not my soul.
Lack one lack both, and the unseen is proved by the seen,
Till that becomes unseen and receive a proof in its turn.”

—*Song of Myself.*

Whitman’s view of the sanctity of the human body drove him to a logical extreme. He demurred and even openly hated any veiled reference to the physical relation of the sexes. Grecian in temperament, like Anatole France, he loathed to see a well-built frame disguised in the frills of the modern-day attire.

III

Whitman was a great socialist. His glowing love for humanity was his sole emotion throughout his life. It was the finest essence of his being. Happiness is no chimera, for he unhesitatingly believed that it lay not so much in some distant El'Dorado, as in one's own daily path;

"We consider bibles and religions divine—I do not say
they are not divine,
I say they have all grown out of you, and may grow
out of you still,
It is not they who give the life, it is you who give the life,
Leaves are not more shed from the trees, or trees from
the earth, than they are shed out of you."

—*Song of Occupations.*

and further on,

"Will you seek afar off? You surely come back at last,
In things best known to you finding the best, or as
good as the best,
In folks nearest to you finding the sweetest,
strongest, lovingest,
Happiness, knowledge, not in another place, but this
place, not for another hour, but this hour,
Man is the first you see or touch, always in friend,
brother, highest neighbour—woman in mother,
sister, wife,
The popular tastes and employments taking precedence
in poems or anywhere,
You work-women and workmen of these states having your
own divine and strong life,
And all else giving place to men and women like you."

—*Song of Occupations.*

His belief in the efficacy of social service for salvation was put to an acid test in the year 1861, when on account of the war between the Northern and the Southern States a huge crop of wounded heroes awaited his healing touch. To them his heart went out freely, although he condemned war on the basis that there was no right provided by God for killing one another. He watched over their beds all day and night as no beloved would. This was his Galahad's vigil. He nursed them and implanted fresh hopes into their hope-rid breasts. Though he hated the war he was not averse to mend its necessary evils. There is a typical passage in *His Specimen Days* illustrative of his attention:

"This afternoon I spent a long time with Oscar Wilber, low with the chronic diarrhoea and a bad wound also. He asked me to read to him a chapter of the *New Testament* . . . The poor wasted

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young man asked me to read how Christ rose again. I read slowly, for Oscar was very weak. It pleased him very much, yet the tears were in his eyes He behaved very manly and affectionately. The kiss I gave him as I was leaving he returned fourfold."

The spirit which breathes through these simple jottings breaks out into a perfect lyric in "A sight in camp in the daybreak grey and dim,"—

"Then to the second step—And who are you my child
and darling ?

Who are you sweet boy with cheeks yet blooming ?

Then to the third—a face nor child nor old, very calm, as of
beautiful yellow old ivory ;

"Young man, I think I know you—I think this face is the
face of Christ Himself,

Dead and divine and brother of all and here again He lies."

So goes on Whitman, the divine friend to all. The secret of his service was sacrifice. When he gave he gave himself thoroughly.

This continuous strain got the better of even his steel frame finally. He gifted himself to the service of all humanity with a love which was the greatest of all gifts. He was soon struck with paralysis, and he laid down his life like a soldier on the battle-field. He had realised that joy had significance only to those that had passed through sorrow ; and that it was one of the chiefest duties of mankind to alleviate suffering and secure Joy to those who lacked it. As a boy when he romped over the seashore he witnessed one of Nature's remorseless tragedies. Day after day he had seen complacently "two feathered guests from Alabama" together and one day the grievous screaming of the he-bird for the loss of his mate cut him to the quick. This painful experience the poet applied to his own heart and whenever his eyes afterwards fell on sorrow he identified himself so much with the aggrieved that his own soul twinged and wept ;

"Agonies are one of my changes of garments,
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels,
I myself become the wounded person,
My hurts turn livid upon me, as I lean on a
cane and observe."

He is an optimist withal. His own sorrows and those of others left no disruptive stain on his cheerfulness. They did not sour his temperament. His permanent buoyancy, however, did not make him blind or callous to the sin and sorrow of the world. He looks upon them all with the perfect detachment of a ripened yogin. He accepted them without flinching, as he believed them to be but transitory. What he believed to be immortal

and everlasting was only the spirit of man. Besides, he believed in the ultimate destiny of human beings as a *karma-yogin*. In his poem "Faces," he refuses to be deluded by "the mean and haggard disguises under which men conceal their infinite possibilities—the cheat, the murderer, the idiot," in the faith that sooner or later the true man would emerge. His words to the Common Prostitute attain the sublimity of Christ's address to Mary Magdalene :

"Be composed—be at ease with me—I am Walt Whitman,
liberal and lusty as nature,
Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you,
Not till the waters refuse to glisten for you and
the leaves to rustle for you, do my words refuse
to glisten and rustle for you,
My girl, I appoint with you an appointment, and I charge
you that you make preparation to be worthy
to meet me,
And I charge you that you be patient and perfect till I come ;
Till then, I salute you with a significant look
that you do not forget me."

To him, as to every genuine *yogin*, there was nothing despicable except one's own despicable self steeped in sin. A veritable Christ of the New World!

IV

Whitman's religion is not divorced from politics. He is generally acclaimed as the foremost among the poets of democracy. He is so not in the sense he believed in the rule of the majority elected by the majority of votes, but in the sense that individuals should be bound to one another by the faster ties of true camaraderie. The spirit of equality and affection should inform the Political Government of a nation. That way Nations became brothers to one another, and there was no need for the narrow activity of Nationalism except for the purpose of group improvement in the attainment of wealth and welfare among its units. It is this principle that inspired him into exclaiming,

"Whoever degrades another degrades me,
And what-so-ever is said or done returns at last to me.
* * * * *

I speak the password primeval, I give the sign of democracy,
By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have
on the same terms. —*Song of Myself*.

He claims equal rights for man and woman, and his ideal city is one where "the women walk in public processions in the streets the same as men, they enter the public assembly and take their places the same as the men."

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To him, "it is great to be woman as to be a man, and nothing is greater than to be the mother of men." In this he is voicing out indirectly our own sentiment about Kali, the World-Mother. So he inculcated that mankind should be fearless and assert their own potential greatness by giving up all slavish mentality. He asks them to "stand erect, self-possessed, reverencing, even glorying in the divine in their own natures." He regards himself divine, not in the egoistic mood, but only in the moment of ecstasy when he felt himself one with God :

" Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever
I touch or am touched from,

* * * * *

This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds."

There is no parallel in any English poet past or living so expressive of the *Advaitic* Doctrine, "I am He." It is this equality which he claims with God that made him proudly utter,

"I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey
work of stars,
And the pismire is equally perfect and a grain of sand
and the egg of the wren,
And the tree toad, is a *chef d'œuvre* for the highest,
And the running blackberry would adorn the parlours
of heaven,
And the narrowest hinge in my hand puts to scorn all
machinery,
And the cow crunching with depressed head surpasses
any statue,
And a mouse is a miracle enough to stagger sextillions
of infidels."

—*Song of Myself.*

Whitman is an embodiment of love. It bases his doctrine of equality. As Selincourt observes,

"There is no patronage in love, nothing of that condescension
which is often misnamed sympathy. Love has
this divine power that he raises to his own level
all that he gathers in his arms."

This central emotion of the poet permeates everything he wrote or thought.

Great names have no charm or attraction for him except when their
spiritual existences are guided by godly principles. It is not the names
but the principles underlying them that make him sing,—

"Underneath Socrates I see, and underneath Christ the divine I see,
The dear love of man for his comrade, the attraction of friend to friend,
Of the well-married husband and wife, of children and parents, of city for city, and land for land."

—*The Base of all Metaphysics.*

He is no revolutionary withal; for his creed is only to establish a righteous kingdom for humanity and plant therein "the dear love of comrades."

The supernatural element in nature does not deter him nor extort any homage; because he is as free as the mountain air and claims kinship with God even:

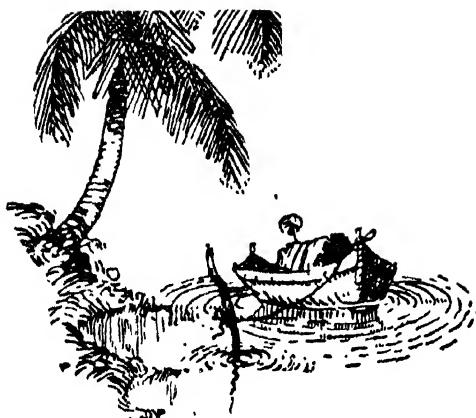
"The supernatural is of no account, myself waiting my time to be one of the supremes,
The day getting ready for me when I shall do as much good as the best, and be as prodigious,
By my lifelumps! becoming already a creator,
Putting myself here and now to the ambush'd womb of the shadows." —*Song of Myself.*

So it is no surprise to note that he is one with Carlyle in regarding history as a string of eminent biographies, and that city as truly great which "has the greatest men and women."

In short, Whitman's politics is a bunch of the principles of liberty, equality, and democracy, which are inspirited with divine comradeship,

"Over the carnage rose the prophetic voice,
Be not disheartened, affection shall solve the problems of freedom yet,
Those who love each other shall become invincible."

If religion could be defined as a glorious march of love of the created to the Creator, Whitman has this religion. Politics is only one of its many aspects. It is related to it as species to genus. In fine, this poet, this sturdy yokel, is a prophet of democracy in all and every ideal significance of the term.



"Boatman"

By KOTHANDARAM

Boatman! You said one day to me that you would row me across the river; but you've postponed my departure and evaded my requests.

I'm tired of waiting and the flame of hope you've kindled is burning me. Oh, will you not row me to-day?

This boat is lazily lying on the water-line tied with a rope to the bamboo. The bamboo is tired of the rope's embrace and longs for the freedom of its loneliness.

Boatman, why don't you untie the knot and grant freedom to the bamboo?

As a horse, shut up in a stable for long, neighs and frets for a ride in the open, this boat, awakened from lazy sleep by passing winds, sways to and fro to rush on the river in its course of floating freedom. .

We all wait for your decision of grace, Boatman, and from afar off I hear the call of the sea to the river and the boat's call to you!

Sikhs and Hinduism

BY PROF. PRITAM SINGH, M.A., Lahore.

I

Sikhs are reformed Hindus. Originally their movement belongs to the great family of reforms that made their appearance in the 15th and 16th centuries and may be classed with the Bhakti cults started by Ramanand, Kabir, Dadu and Chaitanya and by many other mediaeval saints, who gave the message of love and truth with emphasis on *Nam*. Whereas other movements developed on traditional Hindu lines and quieted down into mystical sects, the Sikhs evolved into a crystallised Church. Simple monotheism found expression in the hymns of Guru Nanak, who may be regarded as a great mystic saint. He and the succeeding Gurus aimed at social emancipation and religious uplift, but later on the movement took a strange turn and became political in its aims and military in its methods. From a theocracy to a confederation and a monarchy are steps in the evolution of this reform movement. With the latter phases, however, we are not concerned at present.

A Sikh is really a *shish* or a disciple of the Guru. He seeks communion with God and to him religion means righteousness or right living, which means rejecting every kind of violence and the completest forgiveness of wrongs. This movement broke down all barriers of caste just as Buddhism had done before and other saints did in the 15th and 16th centuries. The whole character of the movement, however, changed when a peaceful sect was turned into a military order and the devotee developed into a soldier-saint. In course of time Sikhs or disciples of the Guru reacted to the environment and became sectarian in character and turned into a military theocracy.

From the days of Guru Nanak to the time when *Granth Sahib* was completed (1500-1604) the movement ran on peaceful lines. After the martyrdom of Guru Arjan, his son Guru Hargobind resorted to the policy of armed resistance. Sikh institutions known as *Panthic* came into existence in the second period, which extended from 1605 to 1700, when the Khalsa, or the "pure one," was brought into existence. The 9th Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in Delhi and as a result his son and successor Guru Gobind Singh the last Guru had to fight Muslim persecution. He lost four of his dear sons and many followers in this struggle.

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It may be noted that in the beginning of the sixteenth century the Hindu mind was not stagnant or retrogressive. Islamic influence was of course there, but Ramanand, Kabir and others were engaged in reforming the Hindus. As a matter of fact, Kabir's hymn have been incorporated in the *Granth Sahib* and his Ram was not different from the Ram of Sikh Gurus. Kabir was as much a monotheist as Guru Nanak. Most of the other sects reverted to mythology and tradition but the Sikh reform remained free from those shackles and adjusted itself to the changing conditions. The earlier phases of the Sikh movement have been coloured more or less by the reflected glory of its later days.

II

GURU NANAK.

Guru Nanak, the Founder of the Sikh Faith, was born in 1469 and died in 1538. There is no contemporary account of his life and all we know of him is from records written half a century or so after his death. Even in those early records, which are scrappy, a lot of myth has been mixed up with facts and they are not free from supernatural touches here and there. The only reliable account is to be found in Mohsin Fani's *Dabistan*, a book that was written in the times of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind, the 5th and 6th Gurus. According to *Dabistan*, Guru Nanak was born in Talwandi now known as Nankana, a village 35 miles south-west of Lahore. His father's name was Kalu. Guru Nanak held a job for some time under Daulat Khan Lodi at Sultanpur where he made that significant observation that there is 'no Hindu and no Musalman,' meaning thereby that he was to reform both the religious systems.

He was married and had two sons and possibly also daughters. From early life he showed signs of renouncing the world and his father Kalu tried him for different occupations but with no result. He was working as a store-keeper of Daulat Khan Lodi when one day he suddenly disappeared. He would pass all his time in the company of mendicants and faqirs. The stories that Guru Nanak visited Ceylon, Baghdad and Mecca seem to be so mixed up with the miraculous, that they become mere fables. His visit to Sayyidpur, now known as Emnabad, is indeed a historical incident and it occurred during the third expedition of Babar and must therefore be placed in the year 1524, when Guru Nanak was about 55 years old. His biographers also tell us that he revisited his home after 12 years as was the custom among Hindu sanyasis. It is also interesting to note that during the earlier days of Sikhism animal diet was not tolerated.

The writer of *Dabistan* says: "Having prohibited his disciples to drink wine and to eat pork, he (Nanak) himself abstained from eating flesh and ordered them not to hurt any living being." After him, this precept was neglected by his followers, but Arjunmall, his successor, renewed the prohibition to eat flesh and said, 'This has not been approved by Nanak.' (see *Dabistan* Vol. II. page 248).

Regarding the Guru's visit to Ceylon, Trump (the translator of Sikh Scriptures) wrote: "It is based on altogether erroneous suppositions: the King and the inhabitants of Ceylon being represented as common Hindus, the Sikh author being quite unaware of the fact that the popular religious belief there was Buddhism. That Nanak founded there a 'Sangat' (congregation) the order of whose divine service, even as detailed, contradicts all history and is an invention of later times." As a matter of fact, Sikhism never spread in South India.

Nanak's visits to Baghdad and Mecca appear to be inventions also. Dr. Bannerjee, the author of the *Evolution of the Khalsa*, observes 'that Nanak's meeting Babar, though not impossible is not very probable'. Guru Nanak of course visited many places in the Punjab and among those particularly mentioned are Pakpatan, Depalpur, Kanganpur, Kasur, Patti, Goindwal, Vairowal, Jalalabad and Kiria (Kari Pathandi) near Amritsar. The story about Hasanabdul (Panja Sahib) is absolutely a myth. At the close of his life he settled in a place known as Kartarpur (Dera Baba Nanak) and passed away having appointed Lahina, a Khatri by caste and a resident of the village Khadur, as Guru and called him Angad or his own 'limb.' Dr. Bannerjee, the author of the *Evolution of the Khalsa*, observes: "The sweetness of his character and the simple truth behind his teachings made him an object of love to all and even today he is remembered as:

"Guru Nanak Shah Fakir
Hindu ka Guru, Mussalman ka Pir".

Guru Nanak's message was one of truth and of peace and was very simple. Repetition of the *Nam* with devotion led to salvation. The externals in religion were decried and emphasis was laid on the spirit of religion. The Hymns and compositions of Guru Nanak are replete with the idea of the greatness of God and the comparative insignificance of everything else. 'Ritualistic practices are of no avail', says he. He makes purity a supreme test of religious life. But this purity had little to do with outward practice; it was primarily a matter of inward devotion and consisted in abandonment of egotism and selfishness. Guru Nanak tried his

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best to break the shackles of conventionalism and wanted his disciples to come face to face with the Supreme Spirit. The *Japji* and *Asa di war* are the two principal prayer books composed by Guru Nanak and every Sikh recites them early in the morning, or listens to them being recited accompanied with music. As a matter of fact, the Sikh reform as inaugurated by Guru Nanak was a replica of the Bhakti movement, sponsored by the mediaeval saints like Ramanuja, Kabir and others. *Granth Sahib* also contains the hymns of Jaidev, Namdev, Ramdas, Pipa, Sadna and Farid. The sacred books of the Hindus are mentioned in the *Granth Sahib*. Kabir says, "Say not that the Hindu and Mussalman books are false; false is he who reflecteth not on them." As a matter of fact, the Sikh Scriptures re-interpret the Hindu sacred books in the popular language of the people of those days. Dr. Bannerjee says:

"It appears that there is no satisfactory evidence to contend that Guru Nanak denounced almost everything that he had found in existence and that it was his object to build an entirely novel structure on the ruins of the old. The Sikh movement is indeed a protest, but it is a protest against conventionalism and not against Hinduism."

III

The Successors of Guru Nanak

After the death of Guru Nanak, Lahina, a disciple, was nominated Guru but the eldest son of Guru Nanak, Sri Chand, was deprived of the *gadi*. Guru Nanak did this not with a view to found a separate religion but as Dr. Narang says: "It was simply to leaven the social and religious thought of the Hindus and to improve the general tone of their moral and spiritual life." There was not much to distinguish the followers of Guru Nanak from the general Hindu mass. As a matter of fact, it was not at all difficult for Hinduism to accommodate the followers of Guru Nanak within its fold and absorb them totally in course of time.

Guru Angad or Lahina (that was his real name) was a devoted follower of Guru Nanak and served his Master with a devotion that was remarkable. He was unlettered and could neither read nor write. Some Sikh writers call him the inventor of the Gurmukhi script but that is not true. All that Guru Angad did was to adopt the script known as *Landa* (vowel less) with no lines above the letters. He must have taken the assistance of a literate person to accomplish this. So it was in the time of Guru Angad that signs were borrowed from Devnagari and added on to *Landa* and the improved script came to be known as Gurmukhi, that is to say, what comes out of the mouth of the Guru. The language of the Sikh Scriptures is

therefore the language as spoken in the 16th century and for all practical purposes it was Hindi.

The work of collecting and compiling the hymns of Guru Nanak was done under the supervision of Guru Angad and was continued in the time of the three succeeding Gurus and Guru Arjan, the 5th Guru, had the material ready for him when the *Granth Sahib* was finally completed in 1604 with the help of Bhai Gurdas.

Another great institution which was set up in this period was the *Langar*. The free offerings of the disciples were used for feeding the poor and the third Guru, Amar Das, who succeeded Guru Angad, used to earn his living by twisting the *Munj* and put his earnings in the *Langar* and then take his food. It may be noted in passing that the *Udasis*, as the, followers of Sri Chand, the eldest son of Guru Nanak, came to be known, took to asceticism and celibacy, but regarded the Guru with the same veneration as the Sikhs did. It was for this that the third Guru, Amar Das, who succeeded Guru Angad, declared the Sikhs to be wholly separate from the *Udasis*.

Guru Amar Das became Guru in 1552. An attempt was made by Datu, son of Guru Angad, to usurp the Guruship but without success. People flocked round Guru Amar Das who settled down in Goindwal. *Langar* flourished in his time and food was served irrespective of caste. What he daily received was daily spent and nothing was left over for the next day. The work of collecting and compiling the hymns went apace Guru Amar Das divided the Sikh spiritual empire into 22 bishoprics known as *Manjis*. A pious Sikh was placed in charge of a local centre and thus the movement came gradually to be organised. The Guru then visited Kurukshetra and made a pilgrimage to Hardwar. He proclaimed the gatherings of the Sikhs on the first of Baisakh and Magh and on the Diwali day, which are regarded as festival days by the Hindus. The strangest thing of all is that at the time of the passing away of Guru Amar Das, he instructed his disciples to perform Hindu rites (see *Granth Sahib*, page 923).

Guru Amar Das was succeeded by his son-in-law, Ram Das, whose father resided in Lahore. He was nominated Guru in 1574. This Guru founded the city Ramdaspur, which is now known as Amritsar or the "tank of nectar." The work was completed by Guru Arjan, the youngest son of Ram Das, who succeeded his father in 1581 at the age of 18. During this Guru's regime tithes were collected from the followers and this strengthened the organisation still further. The Guru would tour the *Manjah*

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region and attract large *Sangats* and thus was laid the foundation of Tarn Taran which is a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs and is next in importance to the Golden Temple at Amritsar. He also founded Kartarpur, a town near Jullundur, but as observed above his greatest work is the compilation and completion of *Granth Sahib* in 1604. Guru Arjan's own composition *Sukhmani*, or Song of Peace, has been incorporated in the *Granth*. This Guru was a great mystic and had pantheistic leanings. He was martyred in Lahore by the orders of the Emperor Jahangir on account of complicity with his rebellious son Khusroe and also because of domestic intrigue, into which we need not enter. This incident was the first of a series of events that brought in a new phase of development and belongs more properly to the history of the transition to militarism under Guru Arjan's son and successor, Guru Hargobind.

IV

Ideals and Institutions

After Guru Arjan's martyrdom Guruship became hereditary. In the case of Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das it was personal and depended upon obedience and devotion to the Guru as was the rule in other sects. It is interesting to note that the rule of primogeniture was not strictly followed and the best available man was nominated. In the case of Guru Harikishan, son of Guru Hargobind, the brother and the uncle were passed over and he was made a Guru at the tender age of eight years. The Guru was however, to be implicitly obeyed and may be classed with the *Murshid*, among the Sufis of Islam. The Guru in Sikhism is to be taken as a vehicle of communion between God and man, the medium through which the *Word* and the grace of God descend on the disciple. The Guru is in possession of the wealth of God and he alone can give it. In *Japji* of Guru Nanak we read :

"The Guru is Shiva, the Guru is Vishnu and Brahma; the Guru is Parbati, Lakshmi, and Saraswati. (*Japji V*).

This is nothing new. This idea was there in Hinduism also. The Gurus could not have transcended the times or the environment in which they were brought up and nurtured. How could they? There is the belief in the doctrine of transmigration of soul which permeates the *Granth Sahib* and that doctrine is essentially Hindu,—at any rate it is not the characteristic feature of Islam. Monotheism and Pantheism merge into the Sikh movement as they do in Hinduism. And if Ramanujacharya and Shankaracharya could not resolve this riddle how can the Sikhs do it at the present day? We are therefore Hindus and will always remain Hindus.

Truth About Sikhism

Sikhism should be regarded as a reform movement within Hinduism. It had its rise in mediaeval India when Babar ruled us. Guru Nanak, the founder of the movement, was a *Darvesh* who had acquired a great insight into things spiritual through *Bhakti*, or devotion. He had a vision of Reality and believed in what the Upanishads had discovered long before, the One behind the many. Guru Nanak therefore preached the simple and the pure doctrine of higher Hinduism and he sang, in easy Hindi, the metaphysical and the philosophic teachings of the Hindu religion which had been handed down to us through an archaic language. The Sikh Gurus did not give us any new doctrine apart from what was already there in the *Bhagavad Gita* and in the Upanishads.

The Sikhs were originally recruited from among the Hindus and were required to pay homage to one God alone, the Creator and the Governor of the universe. Times, however, were changing fast and the Moghul Kings began to fear the growing power of the Sikh Gurus. The sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind, for example, became friendly with the Emperor Jahangir and thereby roused his suspicions and brought trouble for himself as well as for those who came after him. The credit of giving them an organised form, which the Sikhs retain till now, rests with the Tenth Guru, who staked his all for the sake of his devoted followers. Later events brought territorial power into the hands of the tribal chiefs or *Misaldars*, whom the genius of Maharaja Ranjit Singh consolidated into a sovereign state, which proved to be short-lived. The Sikhs to-day are a peaceful community engaged in agriculture and allied pursuits. They number about four millions in all and inhabit regions known as Manjah and Malwa, comprising the central districts of the Punjab. The Sikhs are a very simple people, a vast majority of them being ignorant as well as illiterate. Most of them take to military life as a duck takes to water. They have distinguished themselves on many a battlefield and they possess some very good fighting qualities, but when all is said and done a Sikh is a mercenary.

Unless steps are taken to educate the community on proper lines one may despair of the future of the Sikhs. They have a tendency to lapse into mediaevalism of which they are the product. They should not only march with the times; they should also live up to the ideals of their Gurus.

Guru Nanak had given them a message of peace and good-will; let them be what they profess—the true followers of the Gurus.

The Hour

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

(*From the Russian*)

Awaken, O, friend. A message has come.

Ended thy rest.

Now I have learned where is guarded
One of the Sacred Signs.

Think of the joy if
One sign we shall find.

Before sunrise we shall have to go.

At night we must all prepare.

Look at the night-sky . . .

It is beautiful as never before;

I do not remember

Such another.

Only yesterday

Cassiopeia was sad and misty,

Aldebaran twinkled fearfully

And Venus did not appear.

And now they are all ablaze.

Orion and Arcturus are shining.

Far behind Altair

New starry signs

Are gleaming and the mistiness

Of the constellations is clear and transparent.

Dost thou not see

The path to that

Which tomorrow we shall find ?

The starry masses have awakened.

Take thy fortune.

The armor we shall not need.

The shoes put tightly on,

Tightly girdle thyself,

Our path will be stony.

The East is aflame.

For us

Is the hour.

Creative Work

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

About art in all its manifestations people are accustomed to judge very light-mindedly. Some have read two verses and already speak with authority about the poet. Some have seen three or four pictures or reproductions of pictures and already pass judgement on the artist. From one novel they fix the position of a writer. One book of sketches is enough for an irrevocable opinion over a cup of tea.

More than once has been noted in literature that the celebrated "cup of tea" binds one to nothing. And perhaps the pronouncements at the table likewise are not binding; yet in the meantime they often have very profound consequences. In such conversations over a "cup of tea", people do not think about the fact that the separate productions are only as the petals of the entire oeuvre. Even an experienced horticulturist or botanist would hardly undertake to form a judgement about an entire plant from a single petal or its blossom.

Each one has had occasion to listen to most definite opinions about an author, yet it proved upon verification that only some one volume of all his writings had been read by the speaker—not to mention those in general who do not take the trouble to do any reading themselves, but pronounce their judgements according to the newspaper critiques. But the concept *oeuvre*, the concept of all of a person's creative work, should be set forth with special clearness. Not only a full acquaintance with all the creativeness of the author is needed, but for forming a just estimate it is necessary also to assimilate his productions in the chronological order of their creation.

The whole creative work is like a necklace put together in a definite order. Each production expresses this or that psychological moment of the creator. The life of the artist has been composed of such moments. In order to understand a result one must know the cause. One needs to understand why such and such a sequence of creation took place. Whatever external or internal circumstances were stratified and produced fragments of the whole creativeness, to form an opinion about these would be to speak about the design of a necklace from merely one or two links of it.

In all kinds of creativeness in literature, in music, in the graphic arts—everywhere an attentive and careful correlation is decidedly neces-

CREATIVE WORK

sary. Each one has had occasion to read and to hear, how much has been attributed to authors, which was entirely alien to them, by quoting snatches from their uninterrupted train of thought. You know that not only casual people take it upon themselves to pass judgement. In each domain dwells a self-appointed judge.

I recall how in the law faculty the students were considering how they would apply their assimilated knowledge. One who was attracted to the bar wished to be an administrator; another aspired to the role of prosecutor; but a third, a fun-loving student, said: "For my part, it would certainly suit me to pass judgement on all of you." Who knows, perhaps, this jest really impelled him to a juridical career, for which in the last analysis he had no special aptitudes.

The same happens in many professions; in judgements about creativeness much is contrived completely accidentally. But from this casualness often springs an almost irreparable consequence.

It is said that the valuation by critics changes three times in a century, that is, by generations. To observe these deviations of evaluations will influence public opinion. The competition of publishers or greed of the dealers in artistic productions, finally any of the various forms of envy and enmity are so complexly reflected in appraisals, that for the future investigator or historian it is often completely impossible to discriminate. A great number of examples of this could be adduced.

Let us recall how two competing publishers tried to disparage an author whom they had in view, in order to secure more cheaply the right of publishing his work. You know that such specific belittlements are to be found in any annals. Let us recall how a certain dealer in pictures tried by all means to depreciate for a time the value of an artist, with the end in view of buying up enough of his productions and then commissioning some one to resurrect anew the forgotten or discredited artist.

Let us not bring up certain episodes out of the world of collectors, when competition led these people to most unworthy conduct. It is only important to remember that appraisals of creative work are singularly tortuous and personal. We recollect how a certain music-lover warned a well-known musician not to play on a particular day because an influential critic had a toothache. But when to all these vital fortuities there is united the wish in general not to acquaint oneself with a man's entire oeuvre, then the situation becomes truly tragic.

Let us recall any prolific writer. Can one form a judgement about him without knowing the sequence of all his works? One can, indeed, estimate separate productions of the author, but then this will be an opinion which concerns the production itself but not all the man's creative oeuvre. It is not alone the biography of a great personality, for it is still more valuable to follow the accumulation of creative power and all the paths of its expression. Thus once again we see how significant in its meaning is the word *oeuvre*. It impels one to reflect particularly broadly, it impels one to outline the entire manifestation and comprehensively to examine its influence and consequence.

History, passing from personal *oeuvre*, appraises also the *oeuvre* of an entire nation, of a whole epoch. If the historian does not teach himself in the small and accessible, then by what means can he draw near to and encompass broad problems? Before thinking about such comprehensive tasks it is necessary to reflect about conscientious judgments of parts, of individuals. He who sets himself the task of always staying within the bounds of truth, learns to discriminate in all fortuities and to compare causes and effects carefully. It is a pleasure to rejoice at the whole beautifully composed necklace in which are found many natural colours in unexpected combinations.

Just now, when there is so much destruction and upheaval, each clear, honest, exhaustive understanding of a subject will be an especially needed contemporary task. We have just read how Stokowsky has definitely expressed himself about the harm of mechanical music for true as creativeness. Stokowski has justly reminded us that even between the very vibrations transmitted directly or mechanically there is an enormous difference. Certain instruments are generally imperceptible in mechanical transmission.

In a time when music and science, design and the graphic arts have been subjected to mechanisation, precisely then must the appraisals of creativeness be still more precise, profound, and well-grounded. At this very moment when it is the modern practice to strive for the brief, the staccato and the casual, it is especially necessary to aspire to evaluations on the basis of the entire *oeuvre*.

Though it is difficult to translate that the word *oeuvre* is a very expressive one.

Let it be the seal of our age to record beautiful *oeuvres*, which will safeguard for the glory of the nation entire immutable images of giants of thought and beauty!

The Daughter

BY A. S. RAMAN

(*Rendered by the author from his Telugu play*)

I

(*The gossip of a small crowd at a street corner*)

"Have you heard the news? The Princess has been missing since the morning!"

"Who can trace her out, if she runs away from the palace?"

"That is why she is almost imprisoned in the palace."

"But she will escape from the prison one day. You don't know her strength."

"Why? She has already escaped!"

"As rumour will have it?"

"What do you mean? The King himself has set out searching for her."

"I also hear that he has given her up for lost."

"Obviously she is under the spell of some supernatural powers. What do you say?"

"No, my dear friend, she is simply seeking refuge in human nature against the background of nature. I know her."

"This is a painter's vision."

"She used to say that her home is somewhere in those realms where life is just a dream, realms beyond time and space. Now she has flown away."

"This is a poet's vision, isn't it? This escape is nothing but a frantic attempt to fulfil the purpose of her youth and beauty. That seems to be the plain truth."

"Ah, there you are! Now I remember how weirdly she used to cry at the sight of young handsome Buddhist monks

"Hush! Don't lead us to the gallows."

II

(Twilight. Vihar garden. Bhikku Ananda is plucking flowers. Princess Maitreyi is playing with an antelope. The moon is peeping at the eastern horizon.)

Ananda : (To the flower). O Flower! Why do you quiver so?

Maitreyi : Oh! You speak to flowers!

Ananda : Why not? I know their language.

Maitreyi : Why don't you understand me, then?

Ananda : O Flower! Where is the seat of your smile?

Maitreyi : In the greed of your eyes. (Looks up) O Star! Where is the source of your glow?

Ananda : In the ashes of your hopes. (To the flower) Let your petals droop to dust and teach my eyes just to see.

Maitreyi : O Streamlet! Where is the voice of your song? Is it in the throb of my heart? Let the sands of desert stifle you, my heart is tired. O Moon! Where are your kisses? Ah! They are in the vanity of my dreams.

Ananda : (Cries out all on a sudden): Sister! Sister!

Maitreyi : Don't frighten my antelope with your cries.

Ananda : (Turning to the Princess) Why not go back to your palace? Night is sharpening her claws.

Maitreyi : O Night! Come on and plunge this Vihar in darkness.

Ananda : (To the flower) Sister, we can't live here any longer.

Maitreyi : Why not?

Ananda : (To the flower): Now this garden seems to be the haunt of vultures.

Maitreyi : (Screams) Ah! Ah!

Ananda : Oh! (Runs to her) What is the matter?

Maitreyi : A bee has stung me! See how my lip bleeds! (Shows the lip)

Ananda : Kiss the flower and your bleeding will stop (Gives her a flower)

Maitreyi : No. There are thorns in it. You Bhikkus are completely devoid of all feeling, you breathing stones! Even if the sky falls or the earth quakes, you remain unperturbed.

Ananda : Like a rock against the flow of the tide, eh? And you?

THE DAUGHTER

Maitreyi : I die if the flower falls.

Ananda : No use pining for a flower that fades with the sun.

Maitreyi : I weep with it, I wither with it. Oh! what a wretched life!

Ananda : Wretched life! Whose?

Maitreyi : Human life. Oh! I refuse to live! How I wish to fly away!

Ananda : Whither?

Maitreyi : Into the jaws of Death.

Ananda : Does the process of life stop with death? You go out, just to enter again, don't you?

Maitreyi : But my heaven is in the grave.

Ananda : No. It is on earth. Death is very easy. Life is almost impossible. How far have you fought out the battle of life, Princess?

Maitreyi : Battle! What do you mean? Where are my enemies? I see none.

Ananda : Anybody can kill a visible enemy.

Maitreyi : What about you? Have you not been scared away by the fact of life? Are you not living on dreams like a coward?

Ananda : Yes, I am a coward, so long as you fail to see the inner struggle in me. (*Maitreyi closes her eyes*). Don't fear, my child! Who are you?

Maitreyi : (*With eyes closed*) A vulture. She has been chasing you all these days. And now you are caught. She will dance with you on the edge of the cloud. She will take you into the realms beyond the skies. She will teach you the meaning of your heart. (*Opens her eyes*). You see my gaze! Is it not as deep as the valley between the cloud and the lightning?

Ananda : My child!

Maitreyi : I who am determined to throw you into the abyss!

Ananda : Abyss! Where is it?

Maitreyi : Abyss of the world.

Ananda : You want me to fall into it once again?

Maitreyi : No. It will swallow you. Anand, how do you live in a desert?

Ananda : Is Nature a desert?

Maitreyi : There is Love in Nature everywhere, which seeks fulfilment in oneness with her beloved. The lotus bathes in the Ganges, wears fresh petals, smiles through quiverings, and invokes dawn, just to melt away in the caress of sunshine. The wave swells to its crest, and through a wild wooing, seeks to kiss the cloud. The streamlet flows on, weaving her dreams into a song of lyric cadence, till it merges into the bosom of the ocean.

Ananda : So what ?

Maitreyi : So the place you would like to live in is not Nature, but some unknown dreary desert. (*Kissing the antelope*) This is yours, isn't it ?

Ananda : Yes. Let him have free breath. Do not smother him with kisses.

Maitreyi : It is the sigh of my love.

Ananda : It is the breath of my life.

Maitreyi : So your life is in my hands. Anand, is it so easy to part with a thing which you love most, when once you happen to possess it ?

Ananda : He is my darling !

Maitreyi : And I too—(*Kisses the antelope*). Anand, let me tell you the strange dream that I had last night

I saw a mountain floating on the swinging surface of the ocean. There was none in that part of the world—absolutely none, not a trace of life, except the smile of the moon. The whole atmosphere was calm and serene, in spite of the wail of the wave and whisper of the breeze. I was alone on the peak. Suddenly appeared in the east, some silhouette that had the features of my Anand, and it was slowly moving towards me. I too ran up to embrace it. But with a clenched fist and a twisted brow, it shouted, "Who brought you here ?" "Anand ! Anand !! " My heart throbbed. "I ! I ! Your Death !" With these words, it gave me a knock on my head. I tumbled into the sea. But I was not drowned at once. A lotus had already spread her petals as if to receive me. I lay on her breast for some time. I was safe, I thought. No. The silhouette began to throw stones at the lotus, till the poor flower was

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completely sunk. And with it, I too sank Oh! What a hideous dream!

(*Ananda silent*)

Don't be silent.

Ananda : Who says that I am silent? Don't you hear the cries of my soul?

Maitreyi : Cries! Why?

Ananda : I remember the words of my sister: "So long as there is woman in this world, no war can be won." This has been the burden of her song.

Maitreyi : And I say: Woman gropes in the abyss of life. Man alone shall save her. Anand, I am a petal dropped from your heart. Do you leave me to the worms?

(*Ananda silent*)

Oh! Speak on, Anand. What do you see in my heart? Don't you find yourself enthroned there? Anand, let me love you. Don't stem the tide. Let it flow on, till it breaks at the touch of the shore. Anand, am I not the ideal of your love? Let me tell you the whole story of my life.

Ananda : No. I know it. I have been your biographer.

Maitreyi : Oh! Yes, the bee plays hide-and-seek with the flower.

Ananda : Princess, it is getting dark, go back to your palace.

Maitreyi : Oh! Palace! Where is it? Is it not in the inmost depths of your heart? Speak on, Anand.

Ananda : I wish you had been born dumb.

Maitreyi : Anand, just touch me, I will shrink into a breath, and dwell in your heart, as the source of the smile in your eyes. Anand, let me realise my nothingness in your arms. You are my body, and I, a mere soul. A soul without body is a ghost, and a body without soul is a corpse. So let me make you human by merging into you.

Ananda : Adieu.

(*Moves away; the antelope follows him*)

Maitreyi : (Dreamily) Anand, you see how my heart beats to the rhythm of your step.

III

(Dawn. Princess *Maitreyi* is lying unconscious).

(Enter, Bhikkuni Gotami with a basket of fruits in her hand)

Gotami : Oh Princess ! (Softly touches *Maitreyi* who wakes up as if from a dream). What has happened to you, Princess? Why do you look so abandoned? You are very tired. Take some fruits, won't you?

Maitreyi : I cried for the moon, cried and cried, till I forgot what I was crying for. Tell me which way leads to that temple?

Gotami : Which temple? There is no temple nearby..

Maitreyi : The temple in which I found him enshrined.. Tell me, sister, which way is it?

Gotami : How can I tell you about things that I don't understand? I know only one, temple and that is the one in which we all live, and only one God and that is the one that we all are.

Maitreyi : When I cannot get a thing that I covet most, I simply deify it. You have never coveted such a thing?

Gotami : Nothing except my own life.

Maitreyi : You want to live long?

Gotami : Yes. At least long enough to understand the purpose of life.

Maitreyi : To live is the purpose of life, isn't it? It is quite simple.

Gotami : To live? For one's own sake, or for others? That is where the purpose of life seems to lie.

Maitreyi : I don't understand you.

Gotami : How can a princess understand a nun?

Maitreyi : Sister, how can I possess one whom I love most in the world?

Gotami : By loving those whom your lover loves. That's all, isn't it?

Maitreyi : No, sister. Just tell me what sort of penance can make me acceptable to gods.

Gotami : Gods? Where are they? I know none. Do they live in air, or on earth? But gods or no gods, penance must be performed, if one should live in the memories of those whom one loves most. And perfect penance consists in self-effacement.

Maitreyi : How can I attain to self-effacement?

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Gotami : Through service and sacrifice.

Maitreyi : Sister, don't you take me with you? I am desolate here.

Gotami : Why not, Princess? But you may feel out of place in our Vihar. Let's go.

(EXIT)

IV

(Dawn. A corner in the Vihar. Ananda is worshipping a broken idol of the Buddha.)

(Enter Bhikkuni, Gotami and Princess Maitreyi)

Ananda : (In an ecstasy) Sister! Sister! Victory is mine!

Gotami : So at last you have won.

Ananda : Yes, now there are no enemies in me.

Gotami : Anand, welcome her.

Ananda : (Stares at Maitreyi) It is you! You have come here again.

Maitreyi : You are worshipping an idol that has no face.

Ananda : Yes, an ideal has no face.

Gotami : Anand, spread that Krishnajin first.

(Ananda spreads the Krishnajin)

Take your seat, please.

(Maitreyi sits down; the antelope runs up to her, and lies on her lap).

Maitreyi : I am thirsty.

Gotami : Anand, is there any honey in the Vihar?

Ananda : Yes.

(EXIT)

Maitreyi : I can't relish honey. Let me have only that which quenches one's thirst.

Ananda : Water will do for us.

Maitreyi : For me too, that is enough.

Gotami : I wonder. You are a princess, aren't you? Plain water is of no use to you.

(Enter Ananda with honey)

Ananda : Take it. Quench your thirst first.

Maitreyi : Anand, I am content now, I don't want any honey.

Ananda : Did you go home or not ?

Gotami : Oh ! You seem to be good friends.

Ananda : (To *Maitreyi*) Are we ? (To *Gotami*) Where did you meet her ?

Gotami : In the garden. She was lying unconscious.

Ananda : She might have fallen into a trance.

Gotami : When I woke her up, she smiled and bowed to me.

Ananda : *Maitreyi*, you thought that you could go home alone, with that perturbed mind and palpitating heart ?

Gotami : Let her take some rest. I will send word to her parents.

(Enter a Horseman)

What is the matter, sir ?

Horseman : I am in search of our princess.

Gotami : (To the Princess) *Maitreyi*

Maitreyi : Oh ! You are not tired of this vain pursuit !

Horseman : The Queen, your mother, is on her death-bed.

Maitreyi : I wish her all that I wish for myself.

Horseman : She seems to have almost wept away her life.

Maitreyi : Now you may go.

(The Horseman sheds tears)

Won't you obey our princess ?

Horseman : As it pleases you !

(EXIT)

Maitreyi : You are your mother's last desire.

Maitreyi : Can't you accommodate me here ?

Gotami : Can you live here at all ? This is not a palace and you are a princess.

Maitreyi : Let me live here, as the princess of flowers. Let me lie on the lap of Nature. Let me leave the seen and love the unseen. The seen are my worst enemies. Let me enjoy the unheard melodies of life.

Gotami : What can you do here ?

Maitreyi : Let me understand the message of peace hidden in the whisperings of the breeze, and the rhythm of life lilting on the ripples of the streamlet.

THE DAUGHTER

Ananda : (Rapturously) Ah! Ah!

Maitreyi : Anand, don't you love me even now?

(*Ananda kisses her on the brow*)

Ananda : Oh! Sister! Here is my daughter. I have created her.

Maitreyi : Yes, sister, I am his creature.

Ananda : No. You are my creation. I am proud of you.

Gotami : My child, you have spurned the life of a princess! What a noble heart!

Ananda : Bow to the Arhat, my darling.

(*Maitreyi prostrates herself to the idol of the Buddha*)

Ananda : Now you may love me.

Maitreyi : My father! (Bows to him)

Ananda : Love me and love those that I love, afflicted humanity! Love them alone, because my heart is lost to them. Love them in thought, word and deed.

(Enter the King)

Gotami : Welcome, sir.

King : My child! (Embraces *Maitreyi*)

Maitreyi : Sir!

King : Call me father, kiss me.

Maitreyi : Do not capture me.

King : What do you mean? Your mother is dying. Let us go home.

Maitreyi : Where is home?

King : Our home, the palace.

Maitreyi : No. Here is my home, my heaven.

King : (Smiling) You naughty child!

Gotami : Maitreyi, why not save your mother's life?

Maitreyi : (To the King) Are you not my foe?

King : I am your own father.

Maitreyi : But I am not your daughter. I cannot return to those that claim me all for themselves. I am daughter not to you alone, but to these mute poems of pity, the birds and the beasts, to these crystals of tears, the stones, to these love-lorn lasses, the

palm-trees in the desert! Let me love them all. Nature is my mother. God is my father.

King : Alas!

Maitreyi : Don't weep. You are a king. Find your heaven among the souls entrusted to your care. Bring them up as your own children. Your daughter is there, not here.

King : Am I dreaming?

Maitreyi : No. Your eyes are open.

King : What is a dream, if not that which one cannot possess?

Maitreyi : Go home, and live like a king, father of your subjects. They are your children. Love them and you will love me.

King : (Shedding tears) Adieu!

(EXIT)

(*Gotami, Ananda and Maitreyi chant in chorus— "Om mani padme hum."*)

V

(Same as the opening Scene)

"We are all beggars."

"Do you hear? We are all beggars, he says."

"Sheer blasphemy, isn't it? He always blames entire humanity for what he is."

"And we must be proud that we are beggars."

"Why, please?"

"This is another fool to take fools seriously."

"What, old man, are we really beggars?"

"I say, don't bother him."

"None of us is poor. How can we be called beggars?"

"But what has poverty to do with begging? There are beggars among the rich as well as the poor."

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(Enter a little girl in rags)

"What do you want, my child?"

The little girl: Your faith that we are all of the same family, only this much, I claim from you.

"What did I tell you, my boys? Now listen to this wise little girl."

"She seems to be some princess in disguise. Beggars don't walk with a straightened back, do they?"

The little girl: I am a beggar. Don't take me for anything else. Why do you feel ashamed of being a beggar? Your own princess is a beggar now."

"What! Princess turning beggar!"

The little girl: Yes, the princess is begging from door to door, just to feed the beggars. Now do you understand why we beggars walk with a straightened back?

CURTAIN.

A Full Life

BY U. K. SUJAN, BOMBAY.

Many men are easily influenced by the thoughts generated by a few strong minds, who may or may not be conscious of the good or harm they do to the world by their thoughts. It is only when we know the power of thought and utilise it for the welfare of the world that our minds become aware of the purpose for which we are born on this earth. Most of us drift hither and thither because we have no definite goal. We have imbibed a wrong notion that we can be wise by reading books or hearing lectures etc., but if we examine our minds we will find that they easily believe many things without reasoning or argue too much without understanding the real point of discussion.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to know the nature and functions of the mind and to cultivate it if we want to live a full life. To begin with, we must know that we are not the mind but its masters. Each person has a mind and a heart with which he can think and feel. He can make of his heart a perfect instrument to commune with Nature and use his mind to observe all events taking place around him or to allow them to rot in narrow selfish thoughts and feelings.

Our mind perceives only the shadows of things and hence cannot give us a correct interpretation of what it observes. We have to apply our own inborn intelligence to understand things and events as they really are. Everything has an exterior as well as an interior being. The exterior is merely a form, an expression, a shadow of the interior. So unless we look into the heart of things we cannot know anything in reality. Our mind stops with the exterior, the surface, but our heart can dive deep into the interior and can illumine the mind with a fuller explanation to have a complete view of things.

"The visible is transient, ever changing,
The hidden is eternal, ever refreshing."

Our mind goes after the transient and is constantly moving from one thing to another without getting a full grasp of anything. It is generally proud and assertive, finding fault with others, never admitting its own mistakes. Being self-centred it gives us a distorted view of things. We must develop affection and sympathy for others before we can understand them properly. The present system of education with all its book-knowledge

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and cramming does not deal with the true culture of the heart and mind. Hence the so-called educated people generally quarrel over words and carry on aggressive propaganda through the press and the platform to emphasise their point of view without any regard for Humanity or Brotherliness taught by all the Great Teachers of mankind. Religion has become merely a lip belief and a bigotry. Science is misused for the destruction of mankind. What is the remedy? Tennyson had seen clearly the absurdity of mere book-learning and pointed out the right way when he wrote :

" Let Knowledge grow from more to more
 But more of Reverence in us dwell."

All knowledge is useful for it gives us mastery over facts but unless knowledge is coupled with reverence for life around us, we will become brainy brutes rather than cultured gentlemen. True education deals with the individual as a whole, the physical, emotional, intellectual and the spiritual Being. It does not merely teach the head, leaving the heart to pine and the hands to wither.

"Head, heart and hands." These are the three principal parts of the individual to be trained and developed to reveal the full glory of *inner spiritual being* that each person is in essence but has to be in fact, to fulfil the purpose for which we are born in this world. Every individual, how much-soever empty-minded or indifferent he may appear to be, has the potentiality of becoming a fully Conscious Human Being through complete education and training. He will then take keen interest in the well-being of the world and become friendly to all living creatures. He will not hate anything even though it may be ugly or hideous in appearance for he knows that everything is a manifestation of the Divine Being. Goodwill towards all will be the guiding principle of his life.

The Boy Comes Home

BY A. N. KRISHNA RAO, Bangalore

(Translated from the original Kannada story.)

I

"Usman—Usman."

The boy gave no reply.

"Usman, my son."

"Dada."

The old man took a step forward and turned the boy towards him. The boy looked at the face of his father. He saw before his misty eyes a strong face, with tear-dimmed eyes. The old man returned the look. He, too, understood the reason of this trouble, though both had sought to hide their feelings. It was a vain struggle they had put up unable to face the surging tide of emotions. He had brought up the boy ever since his wife's death, giving him a care that the dead mother might have given him. He had watched him grow from a suckling to a handsome young man with a pride that made him forget his biting poverty. Now Usman was his boy, his idol that brought sunshine to his suffering heart.

Oftentimes, in the past years that now looked like a dream he had thought and planned to give his Usman the best he could and make him a man among men. His best was at all times poor since he was a begging minstrel. Early every morning, he would go out with his *sarangi*, out into the market-place where people gathered and would sing to the accompaniment of the *sarangi*, the songs of Kabir, Meera and a host of others. He would pocket his little earnings and would return home late in the evening, the home which held his all in the world. This sort of miserable existence had eaten into his life and brought its own reaction in its wake. He had wanted his son to be free from this despicable life. He wanted for his boy a steady, regular income which would solve for him the problem of finding his daily bread.

He had succeeded but there was a price to pay.

Usman had a natural taste for music and his voice was exceptionally rich. Added to this he was a comely boy. This had attracted the notice of a touring dramatic troupe of Calcutta. After some negotiations he was at last engaged on a monthly salary of fifty rupees. But with this happy

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turn came a sad incident. He had to part from his father, his all in the world. But he had a glimpse of a compensating idea. He would be a dutiful son, he would keep his father above want with his earnings. This thought mitigated his sorrow at the parting. But Muhamad had no such consolation. He had to part from his only boy. The days would be lonely and without love because there would be no Usman at home. But to his weeping heart came a ray of hope: his boy would become a great musician and all happiness would be his. Thus each nerved himself for the parting.

The train blew its harsh heart-breaking whistle breaking in upon their thoughts and brought them back to realities. They embraced each other warmly. The old man thought of his boy and the youth thought of his father. The world outside had no existence for them. Only the sweet broken word escaped:

"Dada".

"Beta." This was the half-whispered answer.

Time to disengage themselves. They could not be locked in each other's embrace any longer.

Usman broke away from his father and got into the carriage. Slowly it moved out.

Muhamad stood staring blindly at the fast disappearing train. Only the winds carried his sobs for the boy. The train soon vanished out of sight carrying a soul most precious to Muhamad. Almost mechanically Muhamad tore himself away from the Station and towards his home. There was no one in the crowd who could offer any consolation to him. His boy was going away—away into the unknown world. He walked out muttering. The crowd looked at him in wonder and some one laughed brutally. But Muhamad had no ears for anybody. He just walked on muttering to himself, "Beta—Dada—Khuda."

These filled his heart and mind.

II

It was now five years since Usman had joined the troupe. He was now a "Star" and not the obscure person who had joined the Company to make a living. It was a picturesque life that he was now living and the glamour of it was making him forget the miserable and struggling existence he had had outside it. Success had, to a great extent, cast a

veil over the memory of agonised parting from his father and over the five years of struggle towards celebrity. Slowly but steadily the recollections of his father's sacrifices were fading out. Today he had no eyes for any one but himself. He had succeeded after five years of rigorous training into moulding and establishing himself as a "Gavai." He had won the approbation and applause of his master and master's master, the audience. His music had charmed many crowds and many a time he had lost himself in his songs. Of course, his good looks contributed a great deal towards the success and his popularity with the audience. Usman had won a deserved fame in his impersonations of Majnu, Farhad, Suleiman, Dushyanta and Omar Khayyam.

He was no longer the begging minstrel, no longer the hard-worked second. He was today the "Master". He was the uncrowned king of the Dramatic world: his every wish found a ready servant equally in the proprietor and in the servant boy. He was consulted at every step and, more often than not, even his whims were allowed free play. He had to approve of dramas, players and had to give his consent to the dates of productions. In fact, though not in name, he was the boss.

In the Parsi troupe Usman was the leading player and Pyari was the leading lady. Pyari had heard of Usman's reputation and had given up her work in another Company to play with him. When first she came to them there was a difference of opinion regarding her admission amongst them. Some complained against her high demands. Some went further. They charged her with the ruin of many troupes. But Usman's opinion had decided the issue. He thought her music was good. There was no more talk later.

It cannot be definitely stated what made Usman to let her come in. Pyari was a frail, fair woman with beautiful curly hair. Her eyes were large and mischievous. A well-set pearl nose-ring adorned her short yet not attractive nose. Her ears displayed a pair of diamond drops. The sari suited her very well. Her rose-tinted bodice matched beautifully with the thin orange-coloured sari. She wore a fine pair of sandals, decorated with the designs of many flowers. A dainty little silk vanity case with powder and puff as its contents graced her delicate hand. Usman might probably have lost his heart to her vivaciously charming figure. Or perhaps there was an allurement in her songs.

Visitors thronged from far and wide to see Pyari and Usman play. Their names were mentioned everywhere and snatches of their songs were

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on everybody's lips. With the spread of their fame, spread unfortunately the tale of their lives. Players who were once against Pyari took the tale from rumour's mouth and gave it the form of scandal. This soon gave rise to whispers in the press.

Slowly but steadily the lady of the plays became the lady of Usman's life. The stage "Sherin", the "Zuleka" of the phantom life, the imitation "Shakuntala" began to cast her spell of magic on Usman's days. The flame of his love began to consume the love-starved heart, until it became all-powerful. The infatuation was making him forgetful of himself and his place. Out of the forgetfulness there emerged but one in his life. It was Pyari and always Pyari. Just when he was preparing himself for the sacred life of love, infatuation of a base type began to overpower his soul. He would behave like a self-abnegated devotee and would offer his all to her amorous glamour; he would writhe in pain when she gave him a cold shrug. He would thunder curses at her when she preferred to play the role of "Abhisarika" and to go in search of her old friends. But the moment she turned back and cast a mischievous glance he would melt and would wash her feet with tears of love and remorse. He would offer prayers to Khuda and beg for His grace to change her heart and make it more responsive towards him. Usman's pure and innocent heart was gradually shaping itself into a violent theatre of destructive activity. To overcome his troubles and agonies he sought relief in wine to which Pyari had once kindly and lovingly introduced him. Betwixt the tumult of lust and the temptation of wine, he tried to drown himself in insensibility. But these would often show their reactions on the stage and come in the way of expressing his art in a harmonious way.

III

At the western end of the town were a few cottages. These were the dwellings of those unfortunate beings whom the world calls beggars. Their lives were drab, and went in an inexorable sound. They got up in the morning, went about begging and returned late in the evening with a few coppers which the genercus had bestowed on them in sudden fits of charity. Then the night would pass without any incident. Then, again with the sun would commence their daily round.

Their huts were no better than their lives. They were patch-work affairs just serving them against the sun, while in the rainy months they would be literally little floating houses. Then their residents would seek any shelter that would keep their skins dry.

One such house was Muhamad's. He had built it himself and named it "Amin Mahal" after his dead wife. He dreamt of adding one or two more rooms to that construction when Usman would bring home his bride. He had a hundred visions about his son and daughter-in-law. Kismet had deprived him of a daughter and so he wanted to find a sort of recompence in Usman's wife. His little bird of life and love, had its nest always in Usman. Often playing on his *sarangi* he would think of Usman. Some times he would have mental pictures of his boy Usman singing "Asaveri"; at others he would imagine with pleasure how "Hindol" would find its true expression in Usman's graceful voice; at other times he would think how grand "Bhairavi" would be if only Usman would sing it. In such moods by sheer force of habit he would call out "Beta, Usman" forgetting that his son was absent. Immediately he would remember that Usman was at Calcutta and would then heave a sigh. The costume pictures of Usman that were fixed on his walls were the only solace left to him. He would stand gazing at them with feelings of love and pride and would fondle them as if Usman were present in person.

Many a time he would think of going to Calcutta to see his son and his glory. The next moment his eyes would turn towards the picture showing Usman dressed like a prince, in a costly car, and Muhamad would think: "No, no, I shan't go. I am a beggar and he is a prince. What would his friends think of him if they learnt that his father was a beggar? Usman's father in rags!" He would then ponder over his son's attitude if he were to go to Calcutta. But he would laugh at himself at his ignorance and chide himself, "Usman is my son, My son."

It was nearly six years since Usman had left his father. He had kept up contact with his father by sending him some of his pictures. Occasionally he sent him some money too. But for one year past, for reasons best known to himself, he had fallen into absolute silence. Muhamad had worn himself out by eagerly awaiting some news from his son. Sometimes he would think that Usman might have taken ill. The letter he had addressed to the Manager of the Parsi Company brought no response. Muhamad thought and thought. At last he decided that to go to Calcutta was the only course left open.

He had some money in his hands, the money he had fondly saved for buying a beautiful dress for Usman's bride. Now he had to make an inroad upon it. With great reluctance and with a feeling that he was stealing Usman's money he provided himself with enough cash for the

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journey. Also he took with him dried Ragi cakes for his food. He left for Calcutta the same night.

Till he reached Calcutta he had no idea what the place was like. Those huge mansions, rising to giddy heights, the incessant plying of motor cars and deafening noise from every quarter staggered Muhamad. It shook his fond hope of meeting his son. To this was added a constant fear of thieves aggravating his misery. He wandered through the city and inquired after Usman. But who knew his Usman? At last Muhamad remembered that he might enquire at some Parsi theatres. It was at such a one that his Usman began his career.

After three futile days of search Muhamad successfully traced Usman's Parsi Company. His heart was thumping with excitement as he neared the place. A vague fear of his not being recognised by his son gnawed at his sensitive soul.

Just when he was about to enter the portals of the theatre a car passed out in front of him. Muhamad got a fleeting glimpse of the occupant. "Was it he," he asked himself. The resemblance was so close. In hurried haste he timidly approached the gate-keeper. The keeper was staggered at the enquiry made by this beggarly-looking old man. He replied with a touch of superiority, "Yes. He is Gavai Usman Khan Sahib—the great actor."

Muhamad's excitement grew. He asked, "Where is he going now?"

"To Delhi. The Company has gone there for a short season. Khan Sahib is leaving by to-day's train."

Muhamad did not catch the full drift of the answer. He turned his steps to the Station.

By the time he reached the Station the train was slowly steaming out of the platform on its long forward journey.

Wearied and dejected Muhamad sank to the ground and moaned in writhing pain.

"Oh! Khuda, why are you so unkind?"

IV

The Company returned to Calcutta after a successful tour. But things were not all right within. The discontent that was growing against Pyari began to grow and blaze. The proprietors became anxious to quell the

tide of discontent among the actors. The relation and behaviour of Usman and Pyari had shocked the susceptibility of Calcutta. The audience who bore all his erotic explosions in deference to his sweet songs now began to develop a great prejudice. His drunken excesses disgusted the patrons of his music and the patrons kept away from the theatre more and more. The names of Usman and Pyari that once cast a magic spell on the audience were now enough to keep the theatre empty. The Company eventually suffered heavy losses. The proprietors realised the crisis and issued notices both to Pyari and Usman to leave the troupe. Usman then began to think. But even before he could come to a definite realisation of his position Pyari deserted him and went back to her old troupe.

Usman opened his eyes. He began to understand his position. He thought of all the money he had spent on Pyari without the least reservation. And today she was the mistress of his hard-earned money and he was a ruined pauper. His melliflous voice had become a broken reed unable to bear the brunt of excessive indulgence, which had shattered his once handsome frame and rendered it loathsome. His eyes, his cheeks, his chest had all sunk in and were like a carcass ready for destruction. Both from within and without Usman had beggared himself—had made his existence despicably destitute.

One step in the wrong direction. He went on from one wrong step to another. The ship of his life had lost not only its anchor but had lost its skipper. To suppress his misery Usman began to drown himself in a whirlwind of wine and woman. He lost all restraint, all good impulses. There was nothing he would not put his hand to, no level he would not stoop to. He forgot totally his genius, his position and his future. He became blind to the life that might have been his. Any Company that could offer a glass of wine, a good looking mate could claim his service. He sank low day by day.

* * * * *

As a consequence of this awful living he had to undergo a serious surgical operation.

* * * * *

Usman had successfully undergone the operation. During the hospital days the sight of the ever brimful motherly affection bestowed on a neighbouring patient had brought sunshine to Usman's heart. All the hidden feelings and all the old memories began to wake up. He began to remember his past. The vision of his own innocent boyhood, and the

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picture of his father. The unselfish love, the boundless generosity and the magnanimous consideration for his welfare that his father was showering on him came back vividly to his memory. He remembered and wept like a child. He would often sob and mumble "Dada, dada, dada". He saw how little, how small he was before the towering greatness of his father's suffering. Though his eyes were burning with pain his heart had become as light as a feather.

He thought of his home and of his father. A great shame clouded him. He questioned himself as to what his father would think of him, who had so miserably failed. But the thought that he was going to his father who loved him and had brought him up from his infancy, brought him a great consolation.

He started back home.

V

From Calcutta Muhamad returned to his town. His weakened overburdened frame yielded before the strain of his great sorrow at being unable to meet his son. The disappointment had made him so weak that he had hardly any strength left to drag himself home. As he was wending his way from the platform Muhamad fell and was picked up unconscious. Some kind passerby had him removed to the Hospital. From here information was sent to his neighbours, who often visited him in the hospital.

Muhamad was in a precarious condition as if his soul was unwilling to leave its abode. The doctors who attended him shook their heads gnowingly when they saw him on their rounds.

Conscious or in delirium, Muhamad had only one refrain "Usman mera—beta." At the time, in the intense agony of his suffering he did not forget his merciful Creator. He would often address the All merciful and whisper "Khuda, why have you blessed me with this love for my Usman?" The next moment he would express his confidence in his Maker with the question: "Is it because my son and my Khuda are the manifestations of one and the same?"

* * * *

The doctors, as usual, differed in the diagnosis. One of them analysed the case as heart trouble and the other contested it was lung trouble. After some heated discussion they consented to agree that it was galloping consumption. Muhamad as a patient was a great mystery to them. He would often warmly hold the hands of the nurse when she

ame near him to give him the teaspoonful of medicine and pitifully ask : "Why this medicine, my daughter ? If you would only get me my Usman, I shall see him once and then finish the pilgrimage of life in peace." His sad calmness greatly moved the doctors and the nurses.

One morning the sombre sky had assumed a deep frown. There were no clouds but yet the whole aspect was sadly oppressive. Muhamad was deeply merged in prayers. The reflexion of his soul's peace was visible on his worn-out face. After finishing his prayer Muhamad got into his bed with the aid of a ward-boy. He then turned to the doctor :

"Doctor sahib, My Khuda has spoken to me "

"What is the message, my friend ?"

"That my Usman will come to me "

"It is perfectly true." This was, by the way, to keep him calm.

"How can it be true, doctor sahib ? Am I really going to see him—my Usman ?"

"Don't worry my friend. I shall bring him to you myself."

"Then you will show him to me ?"

"Yes, but do not excite yourself. Have your tea and we shall see what happens later."

Muhamad pulled his body to a reclining position and took the cup in his hand. He slowly drank it. A feeling of rest came over him. He closed his eyes.

He opened them a few minutes later. It was not the doctor who was standing before him. It was someone vaguely familiar and even personally intimate. He asked, "Who are you ?"

"I "

He recognised his kindly neighbour beside the stranger who had answered him. He half hazarded a guess that this one might be a friend of his. Then the stranger bent his head and said, "Khan Sahib "

Muhamad raised his head and looked steadily at him.

"Dada "

That was a familiar voice. Muhamad stared at him. Recognition dawned on his eyes. He cried, "Oh my 'boy, you have come."

Muhamad could not say any more. Father and son lost themselves in a deep embrace.

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Some time elapsed. Usman's companion separated them and slowly helped Muhamad into the bed. Usman sat beside his father, caressed the wrinkled face, stroked the silvery beard, wiped the tears from the eyes with the end of his sleeves. Then he said, "Dada, at last I have seen you."

"Beta you have come in time. I cannot believe it. Come, come nearer and embrace me. May God bless you. Now you should not leave me again. Oh, my Amina, if only she were alive to see you again now."

He could not say any more. His voice was choking up. He mutely embraced Usman with great warmth. After a while Usman awoke from the trance-like silence. He turned towards his father's face and gazed at it. The same peaceful, smiling face. The same play of sacrifice and self-abnegation but.....

The Bird had flown. Usman cried :

"Dada, dada, dada,—Ya Khuda." Only the distant echo came back to him as if in a caress.

"Beta Usman, Khuda."

"Chinese culture does not indulge in the purely metaphysical, or the vague and aloof. Nor does it engage itself in study merely for the sake of study, but for the expression and perfection and simplification of human life. It attempts to reconcile the countless entities composing the universe by finding a balance between extremes. It does not seek to question nature's verdict upon man, but to understand how to effect self-control and mutual tolerance. Above all, it identifies the beautiful with the true and the wise"—Madame Chiang Kai-Shek in "China Shall Rise Again."

Umakantha Vidyasekhara

BY D. V. KRISHNAIAH, B. Com. (Hons.), Bezwada

To write about persons in preference to their works published or unpublished does not seem to be the traditional method of appraising literary values in ancient India. It is in the manner of modern criticism that accounts appear in which the importance of persons far outweighs that of what they actually did. Potentialities of achievement and limitations of time and place subject to which they worked, are properly pressed into service in estimating the individuals. Their aspirations and failures are stated with sympathy rather than precision. It is evident that our association with Kalidasa or Panini is only through their works and the significance attached by us to the persons is directly proportional to that of their works. Though this is the ultimate criterion, as it is bound to be even in the case of Shakespeare or Milton, we find among some Western critics a great end often perverse desire to present circumstantial details of personal life which obscure the main objective. It must be conceded, however, that in order to estimate achievements at a proper value an account of the background and environment of the person's field of action is necessary. It is in this spirit that an estimate of a scholar who lived in the modern epoch-making period of Telugu Literature has been attempted here.

Umakantha Vidyasekhara was born in 1889 at Guttikonda, a village in Palnad Taluk of the Guntur District, on a full-moonday of Aswayuja in the year Virodhi. Starting general English education in August 1904 under most unfavourable circumstances characteristic of those ancient villages, he came out successful in the Upper Secondary and Matriculation examinations in 1907 and continued his studies at Guntur in the Mission High School. His exceptional merits were soon recognised and he was taken into the teaching staff of the A. E. L. M. College, where he had been a student. Simultaneously with his English education, he prosecuted his Sanskrit studies under Sistla Sitarama Sastri of the same place. According to his own statements in personal diaries, it was at this juncture that conflicting ideologies began to shake him to the very foundations. Whether to continue his higher studies in English or Sanskrit was a problem for him not economic but cultural. His decision taken at that early age to pursue the latter spared him for his great services to the Andhra country.

The scholarship attained by Vidyasekhara was of a rare order. As he himself says he "made a special study of Vyakarana and Alamkara" and

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had "some knowledge of other branches, Nyaya, Samkhya, Vedanta and Smriti." What this means in terms of our modern specialised and fragmented studies need not be expatiated at length. At the same time, it was his special fortune not to fall into the stagnation of thought of the present day Pandit, as he maintained contact with the powerful dynamic of English education. By August 1910 he was at Bezwada, as a Pandit in the local S. K. P. V. High School where he continued for two years. In 1911, his first publication of *Palnati Veeracharitra* of Srinadha with a critical introduction, attracted the attention of scholars as the first and for a long time a unique and scientific attempt in the editing of classical Telugu works. In the latter half of 1912, he was invited to be the first Manager of the Telugu Academy of Madras and he showed a liberality of thought and convention which the Academy did not retain in its later life when it became the stronghold of a reactionary movement. But soon he had to vacate this chair in favour of the Editorship of a newly started Telugu monthly which he named "Trilinga" under the auspices of the Vavilla Press. "Trilinga" attained a high standard at the very outset, and introduced into the Telugu country several good features of modern journalism, which were forgotten by it soon afterwards. A comparison of a "Trilinga" in 1913-14, as a literary monthly and the present day "Trilinga" as a weekly will at once reveal the difference. It was through this illustrious journal that he made himself known to the country at large. His "Anuswarasiddhanta" startled the Telugu literary world and his reviews of *Vijayanagara samrajyam* and *Kavithwathatthwavicharamu* gave proof of his ability. A special feature of "Trilinga" was the consistent technical education which it imparted to its readers in Rasa, Alamkara and some branches of Indian philosophy. To complete the account of the journalistic career of Vidyasekhara it has only to be mentioned that later he started his own paper entitled "Telugu Desa Vangmaya Patrika" through which he gave some of his best articles in Telugu. He then discontinued his Editor's work and proceeded to Calcutta for higher studies in Sanskrit. At first it appears that he made some unsuccessful attempts to go to foreign countries under the patronage of the Maharaja of Pithapur.

During 1914-16 he was a student of the Government Sanskrit College, Calcutta, under Prof. Surendranatha Chakravarty, where he obtained the Govt. Scholarship at the end of the first year. It is to be regretted that his health failed and he had therefore to return in the midst of his studies. Then he was appointed as Telugu Pandit in the Teachers' College, Saidapet. Finally, in 1920, he was offered the post of Sanskrit Pandit in the Presidency

College, Madras. He joined the service on 14th August 1920. Since then he made original contributions to Telugu literature and managed efficiently the local "Andhrabhashabhbardhanisamajam" till his retirement. His last administrative attempt to introduce an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit as a compulsory subject for students taking Part II in Telugu, did not prove a success in spite of abundant technical support he received both from the press and the public. Domestic calamities overtook him. He lost two wives, two daughters and a son and spent a lonely life in the end. He dedicated his property to the Varalakshmi Vidyasekhara Vagdevi Bhavanam which he founded in his native place. After retirement both from profession and public activity he returned to Guttikonda, where he contemplated several public utilities. Two years elapsed calmly until his sudden death following an attack of paralysis in April 1942.

The task of estimating the writings of Vidyasekhara is difficult at a time when the literature and language of the Telugu country are in a state of transition between new and old values and forms. The significance of a work or of a body of principles, receives the rude shock of surprise and contempt from the followers of the letter of old or new traditions, when they have forgotten or cannot understand their spirit. Vidyasekhara met this double-sided apathy with the cheerfulness of one engaged in an adventure, and calmly worked out his way into a literary ideology, original and yet continuous with the past. Since the early days of the 20th century there have been two well-marked tendencies as a result of our contact with western literature and life. They were firstly a policy of self-surrender to the glamour of the new ideas and secondly the policy of self-emulation based upon a fanatic adherence to broken and wrongly interpreted tradition. The authors of "navyayashita" belong to the former school and consist of "young enthusiasts" often with little depth either of learning or of experience, barring some rare exceptions like Tallavajjhala. To the second category belonged the bulk of the scholars in the country. The controversy over language forms was conducted by these two groups and even a sober critic like Gidugu Ramamurty found it difficult to deal with either, though the youngsters were nearer to him than the scholars. His time was absorbed in appealing to the literary savants with superior erudition and intellect but he could not construct a body of principles helping the formation of a grammar suitable to the growth of language. Vidyasekhara understood the weakness of arguments for literary Telugu when he was the manager of the Telugu Academy and openly condemned them in "Trilinga". At the same time he made it clear that the canon about

“sishtavyavahara” (orthodox tradition) adopted by Ramamurthy was only symbolic of the new spirit but not a scientific and standardised method. Therefore he began to work out his ideas on the lines of Panini, whom he ably translated with several commentaries in 1914, and completed one of his valuable writings under the title of *Vyakaranasiddhantabhashyamu*, embodying the principles of grammar. Illustrating his above work he prepared *Bhashavyakaranamu*, which was not completed unfortunately, showing how to bring within the bounds of grammar the different local versions of Telugu idiom. Thus “vyavaharika bhasha” has become “loukika bhasha” with deeper foundations, putting an end to the licentious forms of local slang which are also claimed as living forms of expression. Letters have passed between Gidugu Ramamurthy and Vidyasekhara in which they have understood and accepted each other's stand. Whatever it may be, Vidyasekhara adopted and maintained a good prose form in his reviews, introductions and short stories. His translation of *Tippu Sultan* of Meadows Taylor also proved popular. His prose is original and accurate and crossed the borders of old Telugu grammar wherever it became necessary but avoided certain peculiar modes of old literary style.

It is not possible to describe in detail the literary stand taken up by Vidyasekhara in a short article. But the best known summary is contained in his presidential address delivered at the Andhra Literary Conference on 9th June 1928. He maintains that Telugu literature since Nannaya has not been able to produce anything comparable to the contribution of early Andhras like Mallinatha, Vidyanatha or Jagannadha to Sanskrit Literature. The bulk of the content of Telugu literature had been imperfect translations of Puranas like *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavata*, etc. and lighter forms of Sanskrit literature, or it took the shape of love-ridden *prabandha*. No one can deny the fact that as such in Telugu *alankara* (poetics) is practically absent. Higher forms of poetry like Drama were never attempted. Peculiarly enough, Telugu verse has been encumbered beyond reasonable limits by the letter and sound affinities of *yati* and *prasa*. As *sabdalankaras* they would have done real service but as compulsory adjuncts to every stanza they produced far-fetched and inappropriate diction in many places. Word-selections have been odd and ridiculous, synonyms gathered merely to save the legal character of the verse. According to Vidyasekhara this defect persisted through all the poets except at some places in Srinatha, Potana, and Vemana, who created good metrical harmony. Thus he believed that a thorough reformation of metrical conventions along the lines of the liberal traditions of the west,

achieved in Sanskrit metres long ago, is necessary. It would be an indispensable pre-requisite of any wholesale developments in Telugu Literature. In fact, subsequent events clearly proved that modern poets favoured metres coming very near to his demands. Out of the *Muthyalasaram* of Guruzada he created 'utkalika' and in his work *Bhashachandassu* he gave metres a simplified form of *gana* and *yati* (in the Sanskritic meaning).

The response to these ideas was one of indifference or opposition based upon the nervousness of going against a tradition ten centuries strong. Honest critics, of course, there were who belonged to the school of Bhamaha regarding the profuse adornment of a musical rhythm as the main characteristic of poetry. There are others bent upon, deliberately and as a matter of fashion, developing anti-Sanskritic elements in Telugu. They do not approve of 'Padantayati' because it obtains in Sanskrit. Some of their heretical measures to banish even the relics of Sanskrit from Telugu are too well-known to deserve a repetition here. Anyhow the total response to the literary ideas of Vidyasekhara though less encouraging at the time has been more tacit in more recent years. Such an unconscious drift towards his ideas shows only the soundness of his convictions rather than a genuine appreciation of the right path of progress.

As a critic, he held his banner high and met many an opponent. On the positive side, his prefaces to the second edition of *Palnativeeracharita*, *Naishadhathatthwajignasa*, *Premaparinamamu*, *Rasameemamsa* etc., are remarkable contributions by themselves. On the negative side, his controversies with Chellapilla Venkatasastry, Sreepada Krishnamurthy Sastry, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri and Malladi Ramakrishna Chayanulu, to mention some, reveal a sense of righteous self-confidence, depth of learning and critical faculty. Even while he was a student, of the V form in 1905 he performed *Ashtavadhana* and *Satavadhana* (the pride of those times) with great ease; and realising their low value, except as a form of amusement, condemned them without reservation that they do not lead to good poetical composition. He had to disagree with Venkata Sastry in this respect, as Sastri loved this form of poetic talent and spent the bulk of his energy on it. Sreepada Krishnamurthy Sastry conducted a long controversy over the correctness of the form *rajovati* which he happened to use in his journal. So far as Vedam Venkataraya Sastry was concerned the trouble arose on certain textual principles of editorship of *Amukta-malyada* and the *tika* for it. In the same connection his discussion over a remark made by Dr. Sir C. R. Reddy that *Manucharitra* has lesser poetic

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value because of *rasabhasa* contained in the episode of Varudhini, is very interesting. Ramakrishnachayanulu opposed Vidyasekhara through the columns of "Abhinavasaraswati" defending Nala's character as depicted by Sri Harsha in *Naishadha* which was adversely criticised in *Naishadhaththwajignasa*. Though I am personally incompetent to pronounce any judgment upon these controversies, they undoubtedly reveal a fresh approach to some of the commonly accepted traditions.

As an essayist, Vidyasekhara's work consists of several articles published in "Trilinga" and "Telugudesha Vangmaya Patrika" on a wide range of topics. Inscriptions, poets, politico-linguistic problems, sea-travel were some of the many problems he discussed exhaustively. His short stories in "Trilinga" were realistic. Precision of thought and ethical fervour characterise his writings.

As the publisher of *Palnativeeracharita* he had to handle historical evidence of various types. But his great contribution to history will be his *Vangmaya Darsanam* dealing with the history of the literature of the Andhras from the very beginning up to the modern times. His "Interpretation of present day poetry" was only an appendix to this great book. Again *Drishtibhedam*, another of his unpublished works, deals with the divergence between the Indian and foreign outlook on Indian Literature. *Rupakabhashyam* is an elaborate classic studying the features of Indian dramatic conceptions comparing them with western theories, those especially of the Greek drama. He wrote a grammar of the Sanskrit Language, in Telugu named *Sanskritavyakaranapradipam*. His *Yativichara* is a booklet on *yati* and its place in prosody.

In order to develop technical literature on poetics he wrote a translation of *Kavyaprakasa*, with commentary, up to 3 cantos. This survey of his works will not be complete if his *Kavya Sitalakshmi* and an incomplete commentary on it are not mentioned.

Umakantha Vidyasekhara was thus a critic, an essayist, a grammarian and scholar, a historian, a poet, a journalist so far as the outside world could judge him. As a private individual he was known to be a man of stubborn resolution, purity of thought, and an extraordinarily reticent temperament. Conversations with him used to be brief and curt. His dealings with others appeared needlessly over-appropriate and he led the life of a typical *vanaprastha*. Painful domestic experiences in life, already alluded to, made him deeply philosophical in outlook. His personal independence was a matter for open comment wherever he was intimately known.

Vidyasekhara was a true revolutionary. He was neither exclusively modern nor ancient in outlook but only a true aspirant for progress. But

he wanted to be proof against, what he termed, "raw imitation" of the west and consequent delusion. A strong critical integrity born out of one's own culture is a pre-requisite for borrowing from other literatures. He was impressed by some of the principles of literary criticism obtaining in the west and copied them humbly. But he refused to surrender himself to the soulless eccentricities of western literary experiments. His interpretation of present-day poetry was a protest against such delusion. Individual authors are gifted poets, no doubt, but it is not what they felt but what they have expressed that we have to judge. Vidyasekhara's writings when fully published will give him an everlasting place in the galaxy of men of letters of India, whatever may be the future decisions of the Andhras in developing their language and literature.

PEACOCK'S FEATHER-EYE

(Rendered from the Telugu of SRI CHENTA DEEKSHITULU)

BY R. APPALASWAMI, M.A., VIZIANAGARAM

O who hath to the peacock given
His feathers lit with lustrous eyes
Which shed soul-holding gleams of heaven ?
And when he spreads his tail fan-wise
And dances with such wondrous grace,
Do not fate-sure in vision rise
The beauty of Lord Krishna's face ?

The sleek and mobile hues that crowd
When sunset creeps through folds of cloud ;
And of sapphires the liquid blaze ;
The glints and luminous replies
In girl's collyrium-painted eyes ;—
Of all rich tints the essence stays
Fast-caught in fair Peacock's-feather-eyes.

O thou blessed, proud Peacock's-feather-eye
That rose in matchless gaiety
From Krishna's twisted knot of hair—
Thou hadst in His romance thy share :
What breath-taking images teem
In thine each fresh revealing gleam,
—Of His resistless shrill flute-notes !
—Of lovely Dames on whom song dotes !

The Novel Today

BY K. K. KAUL, New Delhi.

One of the disabilities of the modern novel is its lack of a healthy public criticism. The almost complete industrialization of the novel as commodity has produced a rackety, snippety, tip-of-the-mouth sort of criticism which provides the novelist with a rabble of customers, rather than with a relatively homogeneous and alert audience.

Those who lead us in literary judgment, our pundits and priests, are very hot against the writers who refuse to the appalling political and economic situation of our time the homage of spiritual enslavement and dream panic. The literary dictators call such writers "escapists," and critics like Jean Prevost, Edmond Jaloux and Desmond MacCarthy, have protested against the word, in which they find absurdity and a kind of insult. But whatever its hint of moral shadiness, critics like Andre Therive and Rene Lalou love it—for its euphony, and because of its implication of horizons. I think such writers tend to be good writers—because they are imaginative, "ergo," will write though the Heavens fall, and all the more if Heaven is in fact falling; whereas the other gentry, the "here-and nowers," have mainly been driven into literary activity by a reaction to the immediacy which, though morally meritorious, is not an essential of the art of writing.

The modern novel inherits a tradition which turned out the cupboards in the effort of exactly realizing a room. Armed with such legacy Arnold Bennett, Somerset Meugham, Hugh Walpole, Miss G. B. Stern, Brett Young, Tomlinson and Martin Armstrong commercialised the writing-machine. They have given us just spurious popular novels. Then there are the best-sellers of the Priesley type—*Grapes of Wrath*, *Chad Hanna*, *Kitty Foyle*, and *H. M. Pulham Esquire*. These are wordy and feminine. Too much easy sensuousness, too much false impressionism, too little structural hardness, such middling novels—talented and deplorable, make no life-mark on fiction's 'overflooded strand.' H. G. Wells is a "liberal fascist" and writes from the point of view of the detached gentleman. Galsworthy beside D. H. Lawrence is ponderous and lifeless. In Lawrence we have sheer genius. His creative vitality and natural genius reminds one of Balzac and Zola. He is the most remarkable English novelist of modern times. Aldous Huxley suffers from too easy a glitter, a lavish display of

cynical intelligence in pinning down like bugs his soiled specimens of humanity and yet *Point Counter* and *Crome Yellow* are a few of the most brilliant of modern novels. Mrs. Woolf is a mystic—contemplating the whole phenomenon of consciousness. She seems to have taken deliberately from Psychology the use of "substitution-symbols" and these recur like Wagnerian "*leit-motif*." E. M. Forster has not exaggerated emotion or over-elaborate diction like Galsworthy, and that makes him important. James Joyce sums up "the individualist movement." His exploration of the subtleties of civilised sensibility, his psychological realism, is always enchanting. His *Ulysses* is the biggest event in the history of the English novel since *Jude*.

One of the most striking characteristics of post-war art has been the widespread desire to entice the common man to come up to the microphone and say a few words.

So Lionel Britton in *Hunger and Love*, James Hanley in *Drift, Ebb and Flood*, Walter Greenwood in *Love on the Dole*, Isherwood in *All the conspirators* and *The Lost*, Edward Upward in *Journey to the Border*, Rex Warner in *The Wild Goose Chase* protest against the moral degradation that makes life dependent; they reveal the running sore in the social body. They show life scalded by horrors in the midst of squalid darkness. But these terrible indictments of our civilization have lyrical serenity. Their portrayal is executed largely in the idiom which Auden has skilfully improvised from the clinical psycho-analysis of Freud. Their characters move in a whirl of frenzy, freely splashed with high colours. They carve out the hard structure of fact and magnify the operation of the drama. In short, their work is at once terrifying and serenely beautiful.

Among the charms of the modern American novel I will mention Upton Sinclair. In his works realism has reached its summit. He has portrayed the utmost conceivable energy, fury, greed, horror, crudity, anguish, majesty and delight. His *The Jungle* is the most outstanding realistic novel. His *Oil* and *Boston*, are books written with the blood of present-day history. In Ernest Heningway and John Dos Passos, we have clipped, hardboiled prose. Passos is an effective interpreter of the disordered, pointlessly rapid life of America. W. Faulkner is the best contemporary regionalist. Sinclair Lewis smacks of the obvious fun of the hundred-percenter. His *Babbit* and *It Can't Happen Here* show his staying power. His *Main Street* shows how he overdoes his manner.

THE NOVEL TO-DAY

through the compulsion of an admirable indignation. Willa Cather has the dominant trait of formlessness. Edith Wharton's *Elhan Frome* was a great novel, yet she was a gifted failure. Floyd Dell is very attractive and combines revolutionary social consciousness with a convincing picture of life and character.

In France, Anatole France proved to be the sceptic and satiric fictional commentator upon the whole human race. In 1920 Andre Gide imposed Proust upon public admiration and he has since exerted a great influence on literature. Gide is rather lustily oriental. His best novel is *The Counterfeiters*. Proust gave us all the pretence, degeneracy, unsatisfied love and also the effects upon it of time's changes. His influence is incalculable. Andre Malrau is a revolutionary novelist. His *Days of Hope*, *Man's Fate* and others reveal a feeling for the movements of man in the mass. *Journey to the End of Night* by Louis-Ferdinand Celines is a great novel. No more horrible vision of modern life has appeared. Joules Romain's *Men of Good Will* and *Death of Nobody* have broadened the technique of the novelist—to include the stir in the human pool. Andre Chamson's *La Galere*, Jean Giono's *Les Vraies Richesses* and novels of Louis Guilloux, Faul Nizan, and Jean Sartre are permeated by one feeling above all others: HUMANITY.

The dominant figure in the German novel is Thomas Mann. He has a deceptively easy and fluent style, his characters are free from the dubious accretions of shadow. His *Magic Mountain* is the most important. Jacob Wessermann in *The Word's Illusions* and the *Goose Man* shows his tremendous passion and vigour. Like Stephan Zewig he has sparks of the divine fire. Sunderman's *Song of Songs* and Franz Hollering's *The Defenders*, have a leaping vitality and a kind of searching radiance. Franz Kafka has a haunting and sinister lucidity.

The end of the civil war in Russia in 1920 gave us a number of writers. Young post-revolutionary prose-writers looked most to Gogol and Leskov. The Five-year Plan gave us novels like Pilnyak's *Volga Flows into the Caspian Sea* and Leonov's *Sot* and *Skutarev Sky*. This position lasted until 1932. In 1934 Gorky's influence produced novelists like Sholokov, Bruno Yasensky-Fedeev, Kataev, and Bely. *Forward, Oh Time, A Man Changing His Skin* and *The Upturned Soil* are all great realistic novels of to-day.

I have mentioned the desire to entice the common man as the most striking characteristic of the modern novel. There are two explanations

of this happy phenomenon of the ubiquity of virtue among common man. One is the Rousseauist conception of the innate goodness of Man in his natural state. The other is the Marxist belief that this goodness is relatively unimpaired among those who do not exploit their fellows for profit. The general statement is that power corrupts—as in Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine*, Giovanni Verga's *The Defeated*, Renn's *Death without Battle*, Yuri Olyesha's *Liompa*, and Henry Green's *Living*.

Having agreed that society is abrogated and dismantled, we are examining the raw material. That, I think, is the mood TODAY.

Bihu Songs

Rendered from the Assamese

by Prof. BIRINCHI KUMAR BARUA, Gauhati

(“Bihu-songs are connected with the Bihu festivals—the national festivals of Assam observed in the beginning of the autumn and the spring seasons.” * The following are translations from the original.)

The arrival of the Bahag-Bihu Festival

- 1 When shall we celebrate the Bihu-day,
Tell me, O dear, dear?
I gaze east and west
And count twelve days clear.

- 2 O dear is my *muga*¹ quilt
And dear is the shuttle,²
But dearer far is the *Bahag-Bihu*
With grace, gaiety indescribable.

- 3 *Bihu* is coming in gorgeous garments,
*Nahar*³ is decked with flowery garlands.
Rustic damsels are mad with its fragrance,
And stumble over the spinning wheel
In haste and love’s expectation.

* *Assamese Literature* (P. E. N. Publication) p. 7

1 *Muga*—a kind of Assamese Silk ; it is very popular with the Assamese women.

2 The knowledge of spinning and weaving is considered as an essential qualification of an Assamese marriageable girl. Even to-day, every Assamese household possesses a loom and other spinning implements.

3 *Nahar*—Sanskrit—‘Nagesvar.’

Young Men's Song

- 4 Cheerless *Chot*¹ has just departed,
Bahag has come with lustre and laughter,
Bhebeli creepers have blossomed,
But, ah, long years shall take
To end the praise of my beloved.
- 5 He calls her fair,
They call her fair,
But I call her dear sweet-heart,
The full-orbed moon of my hearth.
- 6 Beautifully shines the milky moon,
Brightly flicker the heavenly stars,
Gracefully appears from the cottage green
My maiden fair
In beauty beyond compare.
- 7 When I finger my bamboo pipe
And sing a *Bihu* song in glee,
Like a butterfly my fairy
Dances responsive to the melody.
- 8 A cluster of blue-bees in water shines,
Fragrant petals in flower smile,
My love in beauty, youth and prime
Brings to my cottage mirthful rhyme.
- 9 You are in me
And I am thine,
Two hearts by love entwined,
O, who is the divinity
That brings this inseparable unity ?
- 10 Dear *Dikhow*² I may forget,
*Jingling Janjhi*² may not I see,
Let frustration and starvation
Be ever my company !
Ah, I cannot shun the thought
Of my maiden lovely.
- 11 The glorious sun is setting in the west,
Countless cranes fly through the air
The wild waves of thoughts are swollen in me,
A heart cordial is rare to find.

1 *Chot*—the month of *Chaitra*.

2 *Dikhow*, *Janjhi* and *Dhanshree* (in Stanza 13) are three well-known rivers.

BIHU SONGS

Young Maiden's Song

12 O Lord, why dost thou create us ?
O mother, why dost thou bring forth daughter
Ah, what a curse to woman-kind
A husband is rare and difficult to find.

13 While at the harvest field
I got the tiding of my 'herd-boy,'
O, were I a bird, I could fly to thee !
But alas, that bridgeless *Dhanshree*
Stands between you and me.

14 What flowers you give me, O dear,
Tell me what love you avow ?
I scent, but cannot put them in the tress,
Ah, they are withering in my bosom's vase.

15 How can I forget you, O love ?
How can I forget you ?
I wish, I forget thee
By tasting poison from the *Misimi*. *

16 I take *naga* lemon in hills,
Hide salt in my tresses dark as night,
The memory of my darling dear
In my breast I bear
With grief and tear.

17 From my father, I depart,
For my mother, I weep no more ;
Woe, if I were to lose my love,
I take poison and hasten to the grave.

* *Misimi*—a hill-tribe of Assam. The Misimis generally come to the valley to sell their goods.

Assamese Ballads

By PRAFULLADATTA GOSWAMI, Gauhati

When we come to study the folk-lore of a people we show a desire to replenish our urban culture from the source of primal nature. We have been steeped so much in our urban surroundings and have been jaded so much in our urban culture that we have become fed up and are casting about for some fresh and naive source of delight and edification.

This seems to be the intellectual attitude of our study of songs, ballads, beliefs and superstitions and other phenomena connected with the life of people living in touch with the earth.

The present age has given to the life of the ordinary man a new valuation and a new significance. Many issues have cropped up and we are trying to feel a natural kinship with the people of the soil. Because of this, as also from a nationalist attitude, the doings and thinkings of the man in the village have become interesting to us. On the whole, our mind has been so worked up that we have come to folk-lore as a key to understanding of and sympathy with the folk around us. When, therefore, we hear the old woman crooning to her grandchild—

O lady of my heart, Kamala,
How much is the water ?
O lord of my heart,
To my ankle is the water.

our attention is arrested as by something fresh from nature and expressing some experience of peculiar significance. Apparently the question is not very poetic, but when we come to know it in its proper setting and as a poetic symbol of a simple and sincere-hearted people, we are delighted and satisfied emotionally.

The legend of Kamala Kuonri goes thus: Once upon a time there was a severe drought; the fields were parched; the people and the cattle were dying of thirst. So the King of the land had a large tank constructed but no water oozed from the tank-bed. The digging went on for days together only to disappoint the expectant people. At last the king had a dream that if he sacrificed his charming queen Kamala to the Nagini Devi, or Water Goddess, water would well up. The desperate king had to sacrifice his wife.

ASSAMESE BALLADS

The Queen, much beloved of the people, stepped into the tank without demur. The people waited in suspense. Then the King cried out to the victim below :

O lady of my heart, Kamala,
How much is the water?
O lord of my heart,
To my ankle is the water.

The water rose up higher and higher and again the King asked in a similar manner, and once more Queen Kamala replied that the water was up to her knee, up to her waist, and so on, till she disappeared in the rising surge of water. In this tale, which might have originated in a superstitious age out of some actual fact, the self-effacement of the queen appeals to the imagination with all its pathos and poetry

In this essay only a running survey of Assamese ballads will be attempted. The oldest ballads so far discovered are those of *Manikonwar* and *Phulkonwar*. They are rather long and almost like novels, with plots, characterisation and a few historical allusions. The descriptions of social customs are of an old and simple society. The language shows traces of early Assamese, but words of later times, as also touches of a later social background, are to be found. This is because, as everywhere in the world, they have lived orally till very recent times.

Manikonwar, or Prince Mani, is the son of Sankaladiv who is said to be the founder of Gaur, that remained the capital of Bengal for more than two thousand years till it was destroyed in the time of the Mughal Empire, and who seems to have ruled Kamrup about 700 B.C. Sankaladiv gets a son, Manikonwar, as a boon from the Water God. Manikonwar grows up and marries Kachanmala. It is interesting how Kachanmala's father replies to Manyabati, the Prince's mother, when she goes asking for a bride—

She burns large quantities of fuel
She does not know how to weave or how to spin,
But goes loitering about others' looms

Here mention is made of some Assamese fruits for the sake of rhyme. Then—

If you want her and won't disdain,
She shall be given to you.....

Just after the marriage the River God takes the sixteen-year old Prince down into the water. There is great sorrow in the royal family and the young wife's loss is described thus :

With one spurn she broke the lovely spinning wheel.
She broke also the reel;
Much she bewailed, the spotless Kachan,
At the news of her Prince.
As she bewailed, the spotless Kachan,
'The hair of her head loosened,
"Come and let me see you, O my Prince,
Together let us go.
The Lohit has forsaken one of his longest currents,
The Dihing has abandoned his bank,
My parents gave me away in sanctified marriage,
Still on me is the stain of turmeric;
In Chaitra did cry the bird of Chaitra,
In Baisakh cried the frog,
I could not enjoy when I could,
Who was he that divined with the leg of the fowl? *

The King then sends an expert fisherman down into the Dikhow (N.E.Assam) to fish for the lost Prince. The expert attached to a long chain goes down and finds the Prince sitting on a sofa. The latter sends some presents but does not return. The King at last has to send the sorrowing daughter-in-law to her father. Phulkonwar, the hero of the second ballad, is Manikonwar's posthumous son.

There are some ballad stanzas interspersed in folk-tales, the first example being one. Apart from these there is a body of historical ballads. Some twenty years ago was recovered a fairly long ballad dealing with the Burmese invasion of Assam. From 1787 to 1827 was a very unhappy period for the Assamese people. The Kings had degenerated and dissensions had sprung up among the nobility. Finally, about 1824 Badan Borphukon, the Governor of Lower Assam, had the Burmese invited into Assam in order to spite the talented Burha Gohain (i.e., Prime Minister) Purnananda. This was followed by indescribable ravages and atrocities over the people. As is well-known, in 1826 Assam passed into British hands. This period was a severe blow to the uninterrupted development of Assam's cultural and political life. The events—with a few inaccuracies—bearing on the Burmese invasion and the loss of Assam's independence have been sung in the *Barphukonar Geet* or the Ballad of Barphukon. The traitor has also been commemorated in snatches

*Spinning and weaving was and is practised by the Assamese irrespective of castes.
Lohit.—The Brahmaputra.

Dihing,—a tributary to the Brahmaputra.

Turmeric is rubbed on the bride in marriage.

Soothsaying with fowls is a later Ahom custom.

ASSAMESE BALLADS

of songs. The illiterate minstrel describes how Purnananda became Burha-Gohain and tried to systematise the administration of the land—

In the land of Assam, O sire, there is no Minister—
Then is incarnated the Burha Gohain;
The Burha Gohain looks toward the four quarters.
He finds no enemy toward the east;
"But then what to do?—
In the west is my foe, the Barphukon;
The subjects are suffering,
The Barphukon alone is oppressing them.
In whom shall I confide?—
Could I put him in a cage of iron!?"
You may decapitate me, but indeed,
He causes the Parbatia Phukon to be called in;
"Will he escape?
Bring the Barphukon from the west,
Encircle him, leave him not—
Take no bribe.
There's the *sarai* for taking betel-nut,
Bring him in a cage of iron.
I shall be pleased with you,
And should you succeed, yourself shall be the Barphukon.
Have only betel-nut and quick you go.
Go cautiously in a boat;
Be wary lest my daughter-in-law get wind."...

The Burha Gohain's daughter-in-law is the daughter of the Barphukon. It is to be noted that he manages to know of the conspiracy and sends word to her father who escapes and finally goes to Burma. It is interesting how the Barphukon comes upon the Burmese Queen who is really an Assamese Princess:

The Assamese princess, Queen of the Burmese King,
Having taken her bath,
She was looking on—
The Barphukon accosted the Queen of the Burmese King.
"You are in a queer dress,
O lady, whose land may it be?"
"You have come along the river bank,
My son, it is known as the land of the Burmese."
"Whom shall I call my aunt.
Who will present me to the Burmese King?
The moon is in the sky,
Who are you that ask me who I am?
I have come by the water,
The Ghinai Barphukon of Assam
O lady, me they call.".....

The balladist goes on to describe how at last the British come and occupy Assam and give the people peace and security. There are touches of

artlessness which make us laugh, as when the Sahibs are described as taking delightfully first-class sticky curd of buffalo milk.....

Events which appeal to or shock the people's imagination serve as the inspiration of songs and ballads. Jaymati, a Princess who was tortured to death publicly by an oppressive King because she did not let out news of her husband, has been bewailed by the people in ballads and songs. Her son, the powerful Rudra Singha (1695—1714), constructed a temple and a big tank to commemorate his self-sacrificing mother. In 1858 was executed perhaps the most versatile Assamese of the early British period as having complicity in the Sepoy Mutiny. He was Maniram Dewan, Minister of the last Assamese King, an economic expert under the British, a pioneer in the field of discovering and planting tea and mining coal in Assam. He also planned to mine iron in the land. When this great man was executed on the instigation of some jealous British officials and the treachery of an Assamese police inspector, the people gave vent to their shock and helplessness thus:

You smoked upon a gold hookah, O Maniram,
You smoked upon a silver hookah ;
What treason did you commit to the Royalty
That you got a rope round your neck !
How could they catch you, O Maniram,
How could they catch,
Jorhat this side, Golaghat on that,
Through a letter did they catch.
Secretly did they arrest you, O Maniram,
Secretly did they take you ;
Holryed Sahib on the Tokolai bank
Had you secretly hanged.
The stubble of Bara paddy, O Maniram,
The stubble of Barapaddy,
Hardly four days passed his death
And meteors flashed in the sky...

The following quatrain expresses the hatred of the people towards two rebels of lower Assam (1796) :

Where are you now, O Hardatta, where are you, O Beerdatta ?
Where have gone—the rapacious bullies ?
The curse of the people was on them—
And extinct are their families.

These historical ballads and fragments perhaps point to the instinct of the Assamese people.

The present is the age of written literature, but side by side with the multitude of printed and sophisticated books we find in the villages natural poets who still compose songs and ballads to remember events or persons of great significance. It is to be noted that these are composed

ASSAMESE BALLADS

in particular areas, whence afterwards they spread to neighbouring places. The earthquake which caused terrible havoc in some parts of Assam in 1897 inspired a ballad whose idiom is reminiscent of the religious scriptures of Assam. In 1921 Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Assam was the inspiration of some songs—not ballads, properly speaking. Below is given one that I can remember just now—

Weeps Tarún, weeps Nabin,
Weep the Ali brothers,
Gandhi weeps in Gujarat,
Because Swaraj they can't get.

(Tarun and Nabin were two Assamese national leaders)

Even the year 1942 has seen many songs of this nature being created in some places of Assam and Bengal. These depict the fear for and effect of Japanese raids.

So it is seen that the inspiration of Assamese ballads has not ebbed. So long as the village is not urbanised the ballads will live. "It is lore and belongs to the illiterate," as Henry Sidgwick has observed somewhere.

Let me conclude with a few general comments. Assamese ballads are built up of quatrains, some of them having more intricate, perhaps irregular, patterns and sometimes inner rhymes. A quatrain, as the one that follows, recurs with slight variations in several ballads—

Sorrow on sorrow, O people,
Sorrow on sorrow,
The dogs bite, the children throw stones,
Happiness nowhere do you find.

It may also be mentioned that the custom of reciting adaptations of Hindu mythological tales was once, and even now is, very popular. And because of this the snatches of the verses which have stuck in the memory are resung, often distorted and extemporized. The following quatrain is from the lips of a child :

The heroes Nal and Nil dam the ocean,
In one leap Nanumant goes across,
The heroes Nal and Nil dam the ocean,
Shri Hari goes with his train in great joy.

In all these examples simplicity, often crudity, of expression concrete imagery and dramatic forthrightness are the main features. They were once sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and the singers were frequently to be met with in popular gatherings. But as everywhere in India, these minstrels are becoming rarer in the same proportion as the life in the village is getting less joyous and more disintegrated.



ENGLISH

The Promised Day is Come—By Shoghi Effendi, first printed in America in 1941. Published in India, by the Bahai Assembly of Bombay 1942, (176 Pages).

Out of Persia and Islam issued a new religion known as Bahai in the middle of the last century. Since then it has made astonishing progress even in western countries such as the United States of America. A young Persian, Mirza Ali Muhammad, proclaimed in 1844 the coming of a New Prophet. He met his martyrdom after six years of cruel persecution. The message was taken up by Baha'u'llah who declared himself to be the promised Prophet. He spent the rest of his life in a Turkish prison. It is of him that Tolstoy wrote, "We spend our lives trying to unlock the mystery of the universe, but there was a Turkish prisoner, Baha'u'llah, in Akka Palestine, who had the key". Professor Browne, the famous Cambridge scholar in Persian, visited Baha'u'llah in prison and was greatly impressed with the wisdom and sincerity of the new Messenger. Lord Curzon bears testimony to the strength of the hold he had acquired in Persia. The ministry passed to Baha'u'llah's son, Abdul Baha, who, released from prison in 1908, visited France, Germany, England, America and Egypt. He found gratifying response everywhere. His grandson Shoghi Effendi is the appointed first guardian of the Bahai Faith, by whom the present book, *The Promised Day is Come* is compiled.

The book recommends the principal features of the new religion to the attention of the thoughtful. It contains copious extracts from the proclamations and messages of Baha'u'llah, the Founder, to mankind in general and the princes and potentates of the world in particular. He had sent warning letters to the Sultan of Turkey, Napoleon III, Queen Victoria and others.

A keener consciousness of the unity of mankind, subordination of all lesser loyalties, tolerance of all existing faiths, a new stress on a practical programme for world unification such as an International Federal Government and a World Language are some of the specific features of the Bahai Movement. Devotion even into martyrdom, Faith, Vision, Enthusiasm—

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these are prominent elements of religious renovation everywhere and these are truly radiated in the initiating personalities and activities of the new religion. The Bahai movement is a notable addition to the agencies awakening the nobler element in man.

M. A. VENKATA RAO.

Languages and the Linguistic Problem—by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji M.A., D. Litt. Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs, No. 11. Price As. 4.

The multiplicity of languages in India has been over-advertised and the problems of the media of instruction, a common language for all-India purposes and its nature, and of scripts have been exercising the minds of politicians, administrators, scholars and educationists. In the absence of a Government expressing the national will and bent upon carrying out measures to give that will a practical shape, endless academic discussions can be and are being carried on, and there is already a considerable body of literature on the subject. The pamphlet under review is a useful addition to that literature, distinguished as it is by brevity and scholarship.

Dr. Chatterji has put together valuable information on the history and growth of the different languages in India, particularly of Hindi and Urdu. There are not more than 15 literary languages in spite of the enormous number listed by linguistic surveys under languages and dialects. The author argues convincingly presenting the claims of "Hindi (Hindustani)" to be considered as the all-India language, as the 'representative modern Indian language', 'the natural *lingua franca* of 257 millions and the literary language of over 140 millions', 'the third great language in the world coming after northern Chinese and English'. Says Chatterji: "One single army, one single system of higher Civil service and police, one all-India system of education, and one final authority in the shape of an all-India Parliament—these alone will be able to maintain and foster Indian unity. And here we have the need for an Indian language, which we must have for both utility and sentiment." So far the author is proceeding on safe and solid ground, the conclusions being based on hard and irrefutable facts. When, however, he takes up the question of the relative place of the provincial language, the *lingua franca* 'a simplified Hindi or Hindustani, written in a modified Roman alphabet arranged like the Nagari alphabet'—'made optional in the schools and colleges', and English 'which must remain the next important language after the mother tongue in Indian Education,' he enters upon the region of opinion and personal predilection. The author's opinion that when the Congress "declared for 'Hindustani' as the national language of India (not Hindi or Urdu) which can be written in either script" it did so "in despair" is open to question. His own suggestion that for the "Pan-Indian Hindustani", "native Hindi elements failing we should not go to a foreign country for words which can be supplied by Sanskrit", "the door being kept open for all Arabic and Persian words relating specifically to Islamic religion and culture", ending with the admission that "the principle of *laissez-faire* after the Roman script has been adopted should finally settle the question of vocabulary" indeed betrays a mood of helplessness, and the author's preference for a sanskritised speech. Regarding the adoption of the Latin script advocated by the author 'to cut the gordian

knot', one might quote Pandit Jawaharlal who in his equally brief pamphlet on *The Question of Language* says: "I do not think there is the slightest chance of the Latin script replacing Devanagari or Urdu. There is the wall of sentiment, of course, strengthened even more by the fact that the Latin script is associated with our alien rulers. But there are more solid grounds also for its rejection. The scripts are essential parts of our literatures: without them we would be largely cut off from our old inheritance." In spite of the disclaimer of the Pandit that he is merely presenting the layman's point of view and not that of an expert in education or in languages, one feels that in regard to the linguistic problems confronting India, Panditji has covered the ground more comprehensively and with a surer touch.

We are indebted to the Oxford University Press and to the distinguished author of this pamphlet for an admirably concise presentation of the many facts (and figures) bearing on the Indian languages, their growth and present position and for many stimulating suggestions regarding the question of an all-India language.

—KASYAPA.

The Health of India—by Dr. J. B. Grant—(Oxford University Publications 1943. No. 12, As. 4. pages 32.)

In this pamphlet Dr. J. B. Grant of the Rockefeller foundation, now head of the all-India Institute of Hygiene, Calcutta, has sought to give an idea of "The Health of India." As educative or informative, the pamphlet cannot be deemed a success since it would be impossible to compress such a vast subject into so small a compass; but as pointing out the shortcomings of the present system (a) where public Health systems in India have been hitch-hiked to obsolete methods which obtained in Great Britain a century ago, (b) where now a system of 'over-balanced dyarchy prevails, (by too high a provincialisation and too little central control to be efficient, power being given to elected Ministers whose notions of Public Health are lopsided or primitive—Health being a transferred subject) by which local vested interests have brought health progress to near zero, the pamphlet has certainly succeeded.

One wishes greatly indeed that Dr. J. B. Grant was more familiar with Marxism as a method—as outlined by Engels and now developed by the English School headed by J. B. S. Haldane. We would perhaps then be told where we are heading regarding the Health of India, and point out the way where we *should*. Dr. Grant lacks also—not being destined to live always in this country—the historical perspective; he would benefit by reading Pandit Jawaharlal's *Autobiography* with special reference to the Pandit's experiences in the Allahabad Municipality. Did not India have public health ideas before the advent of the English a century and half ago? Would not better prospects for the Health of India arise out of the ashes of the present global bonfire? The League of Nations Health Section (it is well known that India has been the largest, (or is it the only?) financial contributor to the League's maintenance) with its branch in the East in Singapore (nee Shonan) was far too much concerned with

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collecting statistics of prevalent epidemics to enable the White Nations to quarantine ships from less advanced or less powerful nations, and too little with preventing such epidemics prevailing among these nations? Is it too much to expect a more representative International Health League to be formed which would consider the *World Nations* and not the *White Nations* only? Dr. Grant has given the Nelson touch and turned his blind eye to these aspects.

With some of the ideas as advanced by the pamphlet the reviewer is in complete agreement. "Limited funds do not make adequate and good service impossible provided the people want the service and are prepared to contribute work instead of money, and provided there are people with the knowledge to plan such a Service." Dr. Grant quotes Bernal, which is very apt as regards India. "It is probable that an overwhelming majority of diseases that occur throughout the world are due directly or indirectly to the lack of *primary necessities* generally *Food* and many of the remainder to bad living conditions" (Italics mine). Other statements are: "India requires development of Health Education." "The unification of curative and preventive functions under a single administration is an essential and has become an axiom in public Health." (The reviewer agrees to its being so at the periphery, *i.e.*, rural hospitals and sanitation, *vide* the systems working successfully in Denmark). "It was unwise to relinquish the Provincial Governments' control over Local Bodies and it might be wise for Government to centralise the Welfare Services for a given period."

With reference to Medical Education, it is regrettable to note that Dr. Grant seems to lay the fault on the human material, whereas it is the system that is wholly at fault. The prevalent system is based on the medical curricula in Great Britain with its various standards of medical education. Indians, except in recent times, have never been associated with codifying the medical faculties of the various Universities and Schools and the experiences of other nations apart from the English have never been drawn upon. A pertinent question is:—The *Indian* Medical service has existed for the past century and a half and has probably cost India over a hundred crores of Rupees; what has been the return either as research in tropical diseases or in preventive health measures; and yet Dr. Grant says: "Another reflection on the standard of University Medical Education is the relatively small amount of research of significance undertaken in comparison with University Medical Colleges in other countries." Whose is the fault?—one may well ask. Given a tolerable living wage (and not the brown man's meal ticket), the Indian Medical man trained in Indian Medical Faculties is well able to turn out "Research" when tools and opportunity are available. Lala Lajpat Rai's criticism that India maintains the costliest Civil Service in the world should be directed to the Indian Medical Service as well, which is even costlier; the disparity of men with the same foreign and domestic qualifications—the I. M. S. drawing thousands of rupees and non-I. M. S. eking out a livelihood from doles of fees from poor Indians—is a monstrosity. •

Nursing as a profession has never been attractive to the Indian woman as she is usually not wanted and treated with scant courtesy as opposed to the Anglo-Indian nursing woman. Difficulties of necessary education,

pay, and above all, moral well-being have been the chief impediments. A mild measure brought by the Congress Ministry in Madras to protect nurses in a small way was violently protested against by the Anglo-Indian vested interests as protecting Brahmin Widows!

Industrial Hygiene has yet to be ushered into India both by the Government and the Medical faculties. The Government did not want to raise the bogey of better housing and labour conditions or wages compensation and thus lessen the income of the European tea-planter or mine owner till very recently. In a paper in the Royal Society of Medicine in 1933 it was stated that there were no cases of Silicosis in the Kolar Gold Fields and yet one year later X-ray pictures taken of workmen brought to light a number of cases!

Gandhiji's exhortation of a *change of heart* is necessary for any reform on a broad national basis with an international outlook.

As a stimulant of thought Dr. Grant's small brochure has done a most welcome task and it is hoped that he will, before he leaves the land, write a book on the various aspects of Public Health Education.

'ENNE'

The Poligars of Mysore and their Civilization—by P. B. Ramachandra Rao, with a foreword by Rajasevasakta Dewan Bahadur Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar; Demy 8vo. pp. 54, price not stated.

* This is a reprint from the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society and hardly comes up to the usual learned character of articles which should be published in that Journal. Under an ambitious title the writer presents amateurishly made-up accounts of the Poligars of Hoskote, Chickballapur, Chitaldroog, Madhugiri, Tarikere and Gummanayakana Palya. Most of the information is extracted from the Mysore Gazetteer in spite of a pretentious bibliography and teems with mis-statements of fact, inconsistencies and inept comments.

Let us hope that the writer will tap all available sources of information in his next attempt and present a well-knit account of the Ikkeri or Chitaldroog Nayaks, or any one family of importance, which is bound to be of interest to all students of South Indian History.

K. K.

Nowrosjee Wadia College Miscellany—Poona, March 1943. Annual Subscription, Rs. 3.

This is a well-got-up College Miscellany—with Marathi and Urdu sections—published twice a year. The issue before us includes interesting articles like 'The World Predictions and the Pyramids of Gizeh', 'Whither Rupee' and a symposium on novel-reading. We wish the Miscellany a prosperous career and hope it will continue to 'give a fillip to the literary and journalistic talents' of the students of the college.

KASYAPA.

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TELUGU

Ranganatha Ramayanam—(Published by Andhra Viswakala Parishat; Edited by—Sri Veturi Prabhakara Sastry. Foreword and Introduction by Dr. C. R. Reddi and Sri Pingali Lakshmikantam. Price Rs. 7—8—0.)

Ranganatha Ramayanam occupies a prominent place in Telugu Literature and enjoys great popularity in Andhra. If Nannaya was the first poet to translate Mahabharata, Kona Buddha Reddy was the first royal poet to render Ramayana into Telugu in the first half of the thirteenth century. In rendering these two classics into Telugu, Nannaya favoured the *Margi* Type of poetry while Kona Buddha adopted the *Desi* Type which was prevalent in the pre-Nannaya age. With a view to make his translation easily intelligible Kona Buddha chose the 'Dvipada' which is considered to be the 'National Metre' of the Andhras; and secured for his work universal popularity.

In spite of the fact that Kona Buddha in his introductory lines has proclaimed himself the author of this Ramayana dedicated to his father Vittalanatha, critics are divided in opinion as to its authorship. The title given to this book is responsible for this difference. If one class of critics maintain that Buddha Reddi was its author the other attribute it to Ranganatha who, they say, was the poet of Kona Buddha's Court. The reasons adduced by the latter group are however not so convincing. Scrutinizing the contents of inscriptions and other contemporary facts Andhra scholars have come to recognise Kona Buddha as the author of the *Ramayana*. All these details are well discussed in the critical introduction to the present edition, written by Sri Pingali Lakshmikantam, who has had the valuable help of Sri Mallampalli Somasekhara Sarma, the great research scholar, in performing this task.

Buddha Reddi's poetic gifts were of a very high order. His style is lucid, simple and graceful. By this rendering the literary appeal contained in Valmiki has been effectively brought home to the Andhras. But the work may be called an adaptation rather than a literary translation, owing to the deviations from the original adopted by him, among which the following may be noted:—

- (i) he has given an elaborate description of Sita Swayamvara
- (ii) he has abridged the Sundara Kanda and enlarged the Yuddha Kanda
- (iii) he has added the episode of Sulochana
- (iv) the biographical sketch of Viswamitra found in the original does not receive equal prominence in the Telugu version.

Sri Veturi Prabhakara Sastry with his deep scholarship, accuracy in research and keen critical faculty (which are properly commended by Sir C. R. Reddi in his foreword) has edited the text. The 'Appendix' giving other versions of certain passages and incidents is a valuable feature. The get-up and the printing are quite good. By bringing out this beautiful edition the authorities of the Viswakala Parishat have placed Andhras under a deep debt of gratitude.

K. S. J.

KANNADA

Adhunika Russia, in Kannada—By Sjt. P. R. Ramaiya, B. Sc., Editor of the 'Tainadu' and Daily News; Crown 8vo. pp. 356. Price Re. 1/8.

This is the first book in Kannada of any importance on the Russian Revolution, and contains 26 chapters of which chapters 1 to 6 give a brief account of the history of Russia prior to the Revolution, chapters 8 to 17 present the chief events of the Revolution till the Kerensky regime and chapters 18 to 26 deal with later events including brief accounts of Marx and his philosophy, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin and the N. E. P. The narrative is simple and clear. A brief summary of every chapter provided at the end is a helpful feature. The author deserves to be congratulated warmly on his lucidity and conciseness.

But the book suffers from two defects. The treatment of events smacks of partisanship. It is difficult, indeed, to be absolutely impartial in regard to modern Russia. The account given in the book does not give adequate space or importance to the colossal tragedies or brutalities which occurred during the course of the Revolution with the result that the final impression formed is that Mr. Ramaiya writes as an admirer and not as a judge. However, there are only a few errors of fact in the book, such as the mention of the Cheka for the *Gay payoo*, in the later period.

The other defect is one of language. One wishes it had been carefully revised and more polished. That the author is fully conscious of it does not remove the defect, though it does credit to his modesty.

Another defect is in regard to the proper names. The rose may be undoubtedly and equally sweet by any other name but every one cannot have his own name for it. Proper names have to be rendered in recognised forms and according to some principles. The author has taken liberties with proper names just as the English did with Indian names, and has made the task of the next writer on Russia in Kannada needlessly difficult.

The paper and general get-up should have been better for a book of such permanent value, but could not be perhaps managed under present conditions.

K. K.



Abanindranath Tagore to Artists

SRI GURDIAL MALLIK writing in *The Aryan Path* for March 1943, gives the following quotations of the great artist's words to students who were going out to make sketches :

" Do not draw an object or a scene as soon as you see it. That the camera will be able to do more quickly and realistically. You, who aspire to be artists, should observe whatever your eyes fall upon, not only with outer sight but also with insight. Never take up your pencil and paper unless and until what you have seen, day after day, in all its variety of tints and tones, has taken on wings to fly to the vision of its ideal and infinite prototype.

" Nature has a vast memory, in which endless types are stored. You cannot see or study each and every type, far less make a copy of it. And even if you were able to do this, you would be but making a copy of a copy. Then why not be like Nature in this respect? Envisage, with the aid of wonder-spurred imagination, the divine dynamic archetype and reproduce it in your own work ?

" In the presence of Nature always be humble and stand before her hallowed with the hush of holiness. You are her children. So she desires primarily to see you play in her courtyard which is also her cathedral. All art is play,—play of the Beautiful. The universe is His delightful sport. A real artist is less of a pedagogue and more of a playmate."

Songs of Rural India

SHRI DEVENDRA SATYARTHI lectured under P. E. N. auspices on the 19th April, on Indian Folk-songs to the collection of which he has dedicated his life.....

The ordinary histories of India, Shri Satyarthi said, told us of kings and conquests, of battles and bloodshed. But the real history of India, the way people had lived all these centuries was embedded in the rural songs. The heart of Mother India beats to their rhythm. In them she opened her heart to us. Eternal verities like God, the clouds, the good earth, the cycle of birth, life and death, love, longing and sorrow, human relationships, in fact all that constitutes a simple appeal to the permanent elements of human nature, were the recurring *motifs*, whether the song came from Kashmere or from Kerala. The relations between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, the longing of the lonely wife for her absent husband,

found expression in a variety of ways. Shri Satyarthi recited folk-songs from Gujarat and Rajaputana which, but for minor differences of detail, were almost identical in theme and sentiment. The same could be said of most songs from different parts of India. Though often the local colouring changed, the essential unity of theme and sentiment persisted through all their varied expressions and proved irrefutably the basic unity of Indian life and culture.

If poetry was the expression of a full heart, Shri Satyarthi said, in folk-songs we saw poetry at its very source. He cited a peasant's answer to his question why he composed a song, that when the song came to him he had to sing it as inevitably as a rain-cloud must pour down its contents.

On the printed page the songs were dull and lifeless, like dry leaves on a botanist's table. Music and rhythm were their life. The collector of folk-songs had therefore to catch the original melody of the pieces and not merely the words. The rural-dances went hand-in-hand with the songs. The collection and preservation of these receptacles of much that was beautiful, vital and ancient in Indian culture was no unimportant task. (*The Indian P. E. N.*—June, 1943)

Symbolism in Indian Art

(In the course of an informing article Prof. A. S. NARAYANA PILLAI, M.A., M.Litt writes in the *Vedanta Kesari*, May 1943):

The symbolism of Indian art is based on the congruity between form and meaning. In its finest paintings, sculptures or poems, there is a beautiful blending of expression and idea. There is no endowing of objects with artificial significance, no super-adding of meaning to a chosen form.

The technique of attaining this aesthetic synthesis is elaborated in the art treatises of ancient India. In poetry rules are laid down which aim at producing a harmonious blending of diction and subject-matter. The diction is the body, the subject matter the soul of poetry.

In painting and image-making the rules of symbolism are indeed elaborate. From *Vishnudharmottara* (5th cent. A.D.) we learn, to take just one instance, that rivers are to be represented in human shape, but should stand on their *vahanas*, knees should be bent and their hands should hold full pitchers.....

It is this symbolism that gives meaning to Indian sculpture and distinguishes the Hindu worship of images from idolatry. The *pratima* or image expresses a deep principle. The sculptor is interested in the symbolic representation of philosophic truths or subjective experiences and not in copying natural forms.

In architecture, too, this is the guiding principle. The design indicates a mental scheme, a subjective and symbolic meaning.

In both acting and dancing, *abhinaya* or gesticular action forms a main part. *Abhinaya* is an elaborate system of symbolic expression. The word literally means, 'that which leads to or points to (an idea)'. *Abhinaya* enters into both kinds of dance; the *lasya* where the dancer sits

GLEANINGS

and performs the gesticular movements, and the *tandava*, where the dancer stands and does the movements. The gestures have been worked out into a perfect system and the rules are laid down in the code of dancing. Poses of the body, vocal expressions and expressions of mental states are all included in *abhinaya*, which may be regarded as the accepted gesture-language sanctified by usage and tradition. Bharata, the celebrated author of the *Natyasastra*, describes in the eighth chapter of the book, thirteen poses of the head, thirty-six kinds of glances, nine different movements of the eye-balls, nine types of action of the eye-lids, seven of the eye-brows, seven kinds of nose-movements, six poses of the cheek region, six movements each of the lower lip, chin and mouth and four types of colouration of the face.....

This all-comprehensive symbolism of Indian art rescues it from being merely imitative or realistic and gives it its uniqueness and charm. Indian art does not merely thrill or intoxicate; it elevates us. It touches our soul and changes our being.

The Art of Ranada Ukil

Prof. B. C. BHATTACHARYA, M.A., F.R.G.S. (Edin) writing in the *Modern Review*, June 1943, has the following on the art of Ranada Ukil

Soon after he had finished his educational career in the Government School of Art, and the Indian Society of Oriental Art in Calcutta.....he began to produce original paintings of great merit which gave him a rank among the first-rate artists of India. In 1926, he won the Viceroy's prize, a rare award given to the foremost work of a painter. In 1929, Ranada Ukil was chosen as one of the four eminent artists who were commissioned by the Government of India to travel to England and paint the walls and the dome of the "India House" in London.....

After a successful career in England,...Mr. Ukil without caring for any government post went to Delhi and took up the work of the Director of the Ukil's School of Art founded by his elder brother. Now began the real period of his artistic creativity. Within a period of seven years, Mr. Ranada Ukil painted a gallery of paintings, which won for him laurels of praise from all the cultured people of India...

The delicate lines, the colour-scheme, a special toning and texture which characterises his paintings, are indeed the essential qualities of Ukil's art. Mr. Ranada Ukil is a brilliant colourist: his colours are outspoken, his decorative figures hued with a mixture of colours throw a dazzling impression upon the mind of the spectator. I venture to think as a layman that the brilliant tints which he now uses in his pictures may take a new turn, and like his elder brother Sarada Ukil's, his art may appear in an original scheme of colouring, sometimes subdued, sometimes strong, but always alluring our eyes to a transcendental world of *Aurora Borealis*.

In 1940, after the death of his beloved brother, Ranada Ukil buried his pencil and brush in the soil of Delhi, and came down to Benares to make the choicest offerings of his art at the feet of the great God Siva, the Nataraja of dancing, the father of Music and Muses. His settlement in Benares, his opening of a School of Art in the city and a painting class in the Benares Hindu University, augur well and herald a welcome revival of art, which this ancient city deserves so urgently at the present moment...

What is Literature?

The Aryan Path (April 1943) publishes the scholarly paper of PANDIT AMARNATH JHA, Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, giving a comprehensive survey of the canons of literature and literary appreciation as laid down, both in European and Indian languages. The following is a short extract from the paper:

"It is a great utterance, a cry of a great spirit at the sight of the life he sees—a sigh, a smile, or a cheer—tears or laughter or ecstasy—an expression of the mind of a man, of his race, yes, of his age, but to be really great, it must be an expression of the mind of Everyman Like Wordsworth's skylark, it is true to the kindred points of heaven and home. It expresses the spirit of the age, but, transcending it, it expresses universal human truth which alone can invest it with immortality. It is true that no man can walk abroad save on his own shadow; the artist's personality is certain to be reflected in his work, thought and sensibility; the characteristics of the race and country to which he belongs will find their way to his work; the environments in which he has been brought up and lives, the conditions of his life, the circumstances of hardship or comfort that are his lot, will impress his art. But there will always be—there must always be—something else that can ensure permanence; and that is liberty—freedom from the shackles of circumstance and convention, from the limitations of time and space, from the beliefs and ordinances and laws of his country and his age. Art is free. Freedom is the breath of its nostrils. Freedom, not escape; or, if it is escape, it is escape from the hot-house atmosphere of the prison to the fresh air without. That is how Art is without age. That is how it appeals to everyone and is ever fresh and ever young. No hungry generation can tread it down; it never sheds its leaves, nor ever bids the spring adieu. Lenin declared that Liberty is a *bourgeois* illusion. Art and Literature will meet their doom once liberty is denied to the artist and man of letters. Great literature cannot be manufactured to order, whether it be the order of the *bourgeois* or the proletariat. The rich patrons of the past were no more able to dictate to the artist than the mighty dictators of today can command the production of anything durable. Hegel's observation is true that the history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of Freedom. Whatever unholy deeds may ravage the world, even though ruthless warriors should wage incessant wars, in Art is freedom, joy, and light, and certitude and peace."

THE
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'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature, and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

** * * * * * **

To SUBSCRIBERS: 'Triveni' Quarterly issues: March, June, September and December. The Annual Subscription is Rs. 5/- payable in advance. Subscriptions may begin with any issue.

To CONTRIBUTORS: Contributions are invited on all aspects of the modern Indian awakening specially in so far as they relate to the cultural life of India. English translations from outstanding writers in the different Indian languages are specially welcome. Contributions, however, should not exceed 3,000 words ordinarily.

..... *he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !*

—THE SONG CELESTIAL



UNIVERSITY REFORMS

While the amendments to the Delhi University Act were debated on the floor of the Central Legislative Assembly and received due publicity, it is unfortunate that amendments of a far-reaching character proposed to be made in the Annamalai University Act are not destined to receive the benefit of such open discussion. The suspension of the Madras Legislatures, where originally the Annamalai University Bill was hammered into shape clause by clause, makes this impossible. The Annamalai and Andhra Universities have been looked upon as centres for fostering and promoting the language and culture of the respective areas. They are rooted in public sentiment in a sense in which older Universities like those of Madras and Bombay are not. Their career and complexion are, therefore, matters of great public concern.

The amendments to the Annamalai University Act as published reveal a tendency to render the administration more 'totalitarian.' Totalitarianism may be a need, and even a virtue, for Governments engaged in a War, but is a dangerous principle to be embodied in centres of academic learning. It is difficult to understand why there should be an embargo on University teachers sitting on the Senate and the Syndicate, as if to remind them sharply of their status as mere employees. Freedom of growth (including 'freedom from fear') is the very breath of healthy academic life—and the denial of opportunities to the personnel of a University to take their proper share in the discussion of policies and proposals that affect their task most of all is detrimental to this freedom and to the rise of the University to its fullest heights.

There have been misgivings also regarding unjust communal discrimination in regard to admissions to courses of study. It is a

melancholy circumstance that while the best mind and thought of India are chafing against discriminations against Indians in India and abroad, the communal distemper should find a home in University centres, which are the nurseries of the youth of the country, and also leave an unhappy legacy for the future.

There may be plausible arguments in favour of communalism in deciding the proportions of persons in public services so as to maintain a balance of (nepotic?) power and to see that no community committed 'atrocities' against others. But to deprive young men, who are intellectually qualified, of the chances of pursuing higher studies according to their bent of mind on the ground that they are brahmins or harijans is a negation of the basic principle of democracy, that there should be equality of opportunity. The youth of a country are its potential wealth, and the full growth of their talents—whatever the accident of their birth—is, or should be, a matter of national concern. This land has always prided itself on its spirit of tolerance, and should not imitate the spirit which has actuated the lynching of negroes in the United States or the baiting of Jews in Germany and elsewhere.

We trust that this great centre of learning which is a public institution, the creation of an individual philanthropist though it be, will continue to foster the growth of learning and culture in Tamil Nad in a broad and catholic spirit.

UNIVERSITY OF POONA.

The Committee presided over by the Rt. Hon. M. R. Jayakar, appointed last year to make recommendations on the constitution of a Maharashtra University, have submitted their report. Among the older Universities, Bombay happens to be the only one that has not made way for other Universities in the Province where its jurisdiction extends, and though there has been some amount of public demand for Universities in the different linguistic regions that make up the Presidency, for Maharashtra, Karnatak and Gujerat, the Jayakar Committee has been the first officially appointed to consider and report on such a course of development. The Committee have recommended that a University may be constituted with Poona as its centre, to be called the Poona University, and not a Maharashtra one, because the Committee are anxious that the proposed University should not develop a parochial outlook. Poona, though in a way the intellectual and political capital of Maharashtra, is also a cosmopolitan city and is the Headquarters of many All-India institutions. The Committee do not wish, therefore, to make the University a merely Maharashtra body.

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This is a sound and broad view to take, but we trust this would not shelve or prejudge the demand for the creation of another University centre in Karnatak or in Gujerat for which there has been wide demand for some years now. It is only in India that we are wedded to Universities exercising jurisdiction over wide and unwieldy areas, affiliating colleges far and near, and continuing to be examining and diploma-distributing bodies. But the time has come when University centres should be brought into existence to foster the culture and stimulate the intellectual and economic life of every region of India. This is why though we are in the midst of war conditions, proposals have been made for Universities for Rajputana, Orissa and Sind.

A TAMIL SCHOLAR AND PUBLICIST HONOURED

For more than three weeks since the 25th of August there were celebrations taking place in every part of Tamil Nad to honour Sri. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, on his completing sixty years. In this honour to one who has developed the new Tamil writing which combines erudition with simplicity of style, the writers of the new age in Tamil may well see assurance of approval to their own work at the hands of an intelligent literary public. It was the late Dr. Mahamahopadhyaya U. V. Swaminatha Iyer who brought into vogue a style in Tamil writing which was free from pedantry of any kind. Sri. Mudaliar not only replenishes himself from Tamil classics but draws much inspiration from modern writings of the west, and always gives of his best to solving many of our social evils. In other spheres of activity, such as the Labour Movement, Sri. Mudaliar has rendered great services, which entitle him to the appreciation of a grateful public.

Sri. Mudaliar was a Tamil Pandit, when he heard the call for public work consequent on the awakening created in Tamil Nad in the wake of Mrs. Besant's Home Rule Movement. He was a pioneer in installing Tamil in its rightful place as a medium for social and political propaganda, and in the mouth of this gifted exponent, the language acquired charm and power that convinced the sceptics that English was not indispensable to give expression to the higher life and thought of Indians. It was only appropriate, therefore, that the Madras Corporation which honoured this good public servant presented its address in Tamil, and Sri Mudaliar replied in the same language, an event which is unique in the annals of Municipal Corporations.

THE PASSING OF A GREAT SANSKRIT SCHOLAR

Savants and scholars of Oriental Learning, all over the world, will be missing for long that erudite and distinguished Indian scholar, the late Mahamahopadhyaya, Vidyavacaspati, Darsanakalanidhi, Kulapati Prof S. Kuppuswami Sastri, M.A., I.E.S.(Retd.) whose death occurred a short time ago. If, in recent times, much useful work in Sanskrit research and Comparative Philology has been accomplished under the aegis of the University of Madras, it is not a little due to the unstinting labours of the late Mahamahopadhyaya.

A student throughout his life, he had the initial advantage also of having early opportunities for organising institutions and shaping complete courses of study in Sanskrit. When barely twenty-six years of age, in 1906, he came under the magnetic influence of the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Iyer, who easily determined for him his life's work. As Principal of the Madras Sanskrit College, Mylapore, he acquired experience in managing infant institutions which stood him in good stead when transferred as the head of the Maharajah's College of Sanskrit, Trivadi. But the field of activities, that bore such fine fruits, opened to him only after he was chosen with rare foresight by Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, then Indian Member of Council of the Governor of Madras, to fill the Chair of Sanskrit in the Presidency College and the Curatorship of the Library of Oriental Manuscripts. These two places he filled with great usefulness and distinction for more than two decades.

Many will be the tributes that will be paid to his memory, and the void will be felt in learned circles when any schemes for improving Sanskrit studies are deliberated upon in the academic bodies of Indian Universities which have so far received his wise counsel and help. But what will be missed most will be his wonderful speeches in Sanskrit of rich diction and resounding phraseology. For he was master of an excellent style in that tongue, which has earned, paradoxically enough, the name of a dead language.

Scholarship in the west is often measured by the number of books published by a person devoting himself to any branch of learning; but it has always been typical of the east to create traditions of teaching and merge oneself in that labour of love and live in spirit rather than in print. The Mahamahopadhyaya could have, no doubt, published many treatises and discourses if he had cared; but no such ambition ever fired his mind. He invariably derived satisfaction in the publications of his pupils. The only substantial monument of his vast learning to posterity will be the

'THE TRIPLE STREAM'

band of students who studied under him. It is certain that some of them, at any rate, will cherish all that he cherished and revitalise Sanskrit learning by their contributions.

The Madras Samskrta Academy, started in 1927, had the late Mahamahopadhyaya as its fostering President till his death. Orientalists of renown like Professors Sylvain Levi, Leuders, Winternitz and F.W. Thomas met him in person while in India and recognised his outstanding position in the field. As a founder of the *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras, he did much valuable work in bringing together scholars in India and elsewhere, and the Journal in its useful, though somewhat interrupted career, has made it clear to the world of scholars that there is talent in India for intensive study and worthy of wide recognition.

More than all these achievements, his blameless life and independence, his genuine love of books and innate modesty, will be remembered and long continue to inspire his many friends and pupils.

A VETERAN JOURNALIST AND NATION-BUILDER

It is with profound sorrow that we learn, as the final proofs of this issue are passing through the Press, of the death at Calcutta of Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, the veteran journalist, in his 79th year. India and Indian journalism have sustained a heavy and irreparable loss. Ramananda Babu took to the editorship of *Prabasi* in Bengali and the *Modern Review* in English as a mission in life thirty-six years ago. He gave up his Principalship of the Kayastha Pathasala, Allahabad, to devote himself fully to this task. His contribution, through journalism, to the cause of Indian progress during these momentous years has been invaluable. The introduction of art and artists to public notice, the ushering of Tagore, large portions of whose writings were published in the *Review*, to the outside world, scholarly contributions on manifold aspects of Indian Culture, past and present, and the able discussion of contemporary Indian problems, social, economic and political, are among the achievements to the credit of this foremost of Indian Monthlies in English. Its pages have been a treasure-house of information to the Indian student and to outsiders interested in India. The copious editorial notes that Ramananda Babu himself wrote, brief, telling, well-documented, outspoken and independent, often marked by mild sarcasm and dry humour will long be missed. We pay our respectful homage to the memory of a most successful and illustrious journalist and nation-builder, and offer our condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

An Argument

(An English version of the Author's Kannada poem)

BY MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR

1

Sometimes my mind misgives me and I ask
If you exist:
Sometimes when, in the important single task
Of bringing grist
To the great mill-wheel of life's mere being
Ever grinding on,
The mind has lost its native skill of seeing,
All vision gone.

2

You do exist; of course; whence thought of you
If you did not?
I know that all that ever comes to view
Within the grot
Or distant corner of the mind, great, good,
Is certain true.
Naught noble, great, or beautiful that I would,
But will, in you.

3

You are. I am. O Great beyond all speech,
Or what man's dreams
In their far weary winging ever shall reach,
Behind what seems
You are; eternal, endless, unbegun;
We, worst and best,
Shall in the end, our tasks undone or done,
In thee rest.

Rabindranath Tagore's Views on Aesthetics

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L., Vellore.

Rabindranath Tagore says in one of the songs in the *Gitanjali*:

"Mirth spreads from leaf to leaf, my darling, and gladness without measure. The heaven's river has drowned its banks and the flood of joy is abroad."

What is the heaven's river full of the flood of joy? It is *Ananda* or Bliss which is at the core of all being. Pure integral *Ananda* or Bliss is the bliss of spiritual realisation. The refraction of the white light of *Ananda* into the multi-tinted splendours of Art is aesthetic delight. This is the quintessential teaching of Indian Aesthetics and it is the teaching of Tagore as well. Though the Indian is called a pessimist, he has always felt and said that bliss is the central core of consciousness and that consciousness is the central core of life. Tagore says about his intimate experience of this bliss-aspect of life:

"In the mornings every now and then, a kind of unspeakable joy without any cause, used to overflow my heart.....All the beauty, sweetness, and scent of this world.....all these used to make me feel the presence of a dimly recognised being, assuming so many forms just to keep me company."

He says again:

"A singular glory covered the entire universe for me—bliss and beauty seemed to ripple all over the world."

Indian aestheticians add to this concept of *Ananda* the concepts of *rasa* and *dhvani* (aesthetic emotion and aesthetic suggestiveness). It is only when we have a perfect fusion of imagination and emotion and suggestiveness that we can have the highest aesthetic effects in any of the fine arts. Beauty, though seen with the physical eyes, reveals her sweetest ravishment only to the inner eye. Tagore says in *The Gardener*:

"I hold her hands and press her to my breast.
I try to fill my arms with her loveliness,
to plunder her sweet smile with kisses,
to drink her dark glances with my eyes.
Ah, but where is it? Who can strain the
blue from the sky?
I try to grasp the beauty; it eludes me
leaving only the body in my hands.
Baffled and weary I come back.
How can the body touch the flower
which only the spirit may touch?"

He says again :

"We, therefore, see that all that the artist is anxious for is to express this invisible and inexpressible within, lying in the heart of the visible and the tangible without. . . . The invisible and the inner beauty of the universe is a thing of the heart, and the artist knows it as such."

The artist is, therefore, a realiser and revealer of truth, which is the inner reality as distinguished from outer fact. Tagore says :

"In as much as art restrains 'reality,' it lets in truth, which is greater than 'reality.' The professional artist is a mere witness to 'reality,' while the real artist is a witness to truth. We see the productions of the one with our corporeal eyes, and of the other with the deeper eye of contemplation. And to see anything in contemplation requires, first and foremost, that the obsession of the senses be curbed strongly and this declaration be made to all outward forms that they are never ultimate or final, never an end but always means to an end."

In a very famous essay on *What is Art* Tagore points out that man is higher than the animals because his knowledge is not exhausted by search for food and his love is not circumscribed by sex-love and love of offspring. He says :

"Man has a fund of emotional energy which is not all occupied with his self-preservation. This surplus seeks its outlet in the creation of Art, for man's civilisation is built upon his surplus."

He says again :

"Our emotions are the gastric juices which transform this world of appearance into the more intimate world of sentiments. On the other hand, this outer world has its own juices, having their various qualities which excite our emotional activities. This is called in our Sanskrit rhetoric *rasa*, which signifies outer juices having their response in the inner juices of our emotions... Therefore, the Sanskrit rhetoricians say, in poetry we have to use words which have the proper taste—which do not merely talk but conjure up pictures and sing."

The true principle of art is the principle of unity. Tagore refers to what he calls "the taste values" of art and makes us feel that, further, the artist combines what is individual with what is universal. Thus emotion and suggestiveness are of the essence of art; and art should express personality and should be thoroughly individual and yet completely universal. Another vital element in art is the element of realisation of truth through love and sympathy. Further, we have in it the creation of freedom and the freedom of creation. Tagore is very fond of two

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Upanishadic expressions—*Shantam Shivam Sundaram* (Peace, Auspiciousness and Beauty) and *Ananda rupam amritam yad Vibhathi* (that which shines in its blissful and immortal form.) He says :

"This building of man's true world—the living world of truth and beauty—is the function of Art."

I shall now refer to Tagore's illuminating remarks on the various fine arts. He says about Indian music :

"Our music, as it were, moves above the incidents of daily life and, because of it, it is so full of detachment and tenderness—as if it were appointed to reveal the beauty of the innermost and unutterable mystery of the human heart and the world."

He says further :

"Song is glorious in its own right; why should it accept the slavery of words? Song begins where words end. The inexplicable is the domain of music. It can say what words cannot, so that the less the words of the song disturb the song, the better."

In regard to drama he pleads for romantic and creative idealism. He says :

"If the Hindu spectator has not been too far infected with the greed for realism and the Hindu artist still has any respect for his craft and his skill, the best thing that they can do for themselves is to regain their freedom by making a clean sweep of the costly rubbish that has accumulated round about and is clogging the stage."

He says again :

"Like the true wife who wants none other than her husband, the true poem, dramatic or otherwise, wants none other than the understanding mind. We all act to ourselves as we read a play, and the play which cannot be sufficiently interpreted by such invisible acting has never yet gained the laurel for its author."

Tagore says that each art should express its own innate glory and should not borrow effects from other arts. Music overweighted with words, poetry merely melodious, over-symbolical painting, and sculpture seeking to express movement, miss their true purpose and loveliness. Tagore says about poesy that her glory is to be the bride of God.

"My song has put off her adornments, she has no pride of dress or decoration. Ornaments would drown thy whispers; they would come between Thee and me; their jingling would drown thy whispers."

In short, Art is the gate of Beauty leading to God.

"I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of my song
Thy feet which I could never aspire to reach."

The Search for a Philosophy of Indian Education

By Dr. P. NATARAJAN, D'Litt. (Paris), Varkala.

Every living nation has a national system of education based on a philosophy which it has accepted. There is perhaps no domain of national activity so dependent on a clear-cut philosophy as the education of the young. Is the mind of the child a clean slate on which impressions have to be made in future, or is it already full of impressions which determine its future activity and education? Is religion to be taught in schools? Are children to be assumed to be scientific materialists for the future of India? These are some of the questions that have to be answered before anything like planned national effort in educational reconstruction could be thought of. Schools which consider themselves 'national' have to come to some sort of understanding in these matters. Then alone could we expect concerted action to develop. At present the energy of national enthusiasts seems to spend itself in the wearing of national dress and the shouting of slogans. At best, it might reach out to the admiration of national heroes or go one step further to accepting in a lukewarm way such items of the national programme as the abolition of untouchability. It is deplorable, however, that no serious or patient and painstaking effort is in evidence which would help us to have a theory of education suited to our national genius.

It is true that there are some who have devoted some attention to this matter. It was Sister Nivedita, under the inspiration of Swami Vivekananda, who attempted early to formulate the aims of national education. Then came that patriot, Lala Lajpat Rai. Since the time of these early writers and thinkers literature on the subject, it is true, has grown, some inspired by spiritual considerations, others by requirements of the State. Educational philosophy, as such, however, has not so far received the attention it ought to have received.

With the younger generation of the vocalized urban public in India Russia has become a word to swear by. Youth is carried away by the imagination of the revolution in that vast country but many of them do not seem to realize the implications of the revolution, and the thorough-going materialistic philosophy that has come to be accepted by that nation. This materialism does not stop with politics. It encroaches into the field

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of the education of the youngest nurslings of the nation. While the rest of the civilized world has accepted the principle of the liberty of the child, with a sheer attitude of vengeance and reaction, it would seem, the Russians wish to apply the opposite philosophy. The following striking sentence from a Resolution passed at a large Conference held to consider the principles underlying pre-school education will reveal this attitude unmistakably. The import of the words become all the more striking when we remember that it refers to children under three years of age. It laid down the object of even pre-school education as "the development of the maximum activity and initiative; the maximum possibility of collective direction of activity; while preserving and developing such elements of individuality as will guarantee each child the greatest capacity for living and manifesting its instincts of creative work and research, and the possibility of acting on its own experience, from definite sense observation capable of immediate utilization."¹ In another place² Mr. A. Pinkevich states as follows in so many unmistakable words: "It need not be stressed that the pre-school period, as well as the school period, aims at the inculcation of the materialistic international world outlook." These are plain indications of the philosophy underlying education in Soviet Russia. How many of us here want this attitude in India when its implications are fully understood?

America is perhaps the other country which strikes the imagination of Indian youth. America does not take the extreme utilitarian and materialistic position as Russia but the Pragmatic philosophy which is the accepted basis of American education contains the same principle though in a more diluted form. There are no absolute values in Pragmatism. What 'works', or succeeds here and now, is everything, and the True and the Good are to be reduced and boiled down to terms of usefulness if they are to be acceptable to the pragmatist. This philosophy might suit certain stages of the development of the individual personality in the process of education but it cannot satisfy all stages. The child under twelve must definitely be left free to understand things which may not fulfil the strict pragmatic tests. In higher education, again, the pragmatic touchstone in education would mislead us.

The failings of the matter-of-fact and conventional English attitude in Education is what we know so well here in India. It is supported

1. P. 45 *Science and Education in the U.S.S.R.* A. Pinkevich

2. Opt. Cit, Page 51.

by the philosophy of Spencer and Locke and at best works on the basis of biological analogies. Purely human values get left out and the scope of education becomes restricted by a biological determinism, on which mental testing is a superstructure. The development of a strong individuality is all that it aims at, even when it works at its best. Competition and survival of the fittest are ideas that are tacitly implied, and the higher and truly human aspects of the development of the personality are left out of its scope. Some public schools attempt to develop something vaguely resembling character; but this they succeed in doing through certain traditional factors peculiar to these institutions rather than on the basis of any conscious educational theory.

In our search for a suitable educational theory for our country we can go to more remote Continental philosophers. Here, again, we cannot find a basis which can be said to be perfectly in keeping with India's heritage. The idealism of Kant comes very near to what we want and what is in keeping with the genius of our country. Kant himself depends on Rousseau, who may be said to be the father of modern educational theory. Close students of Rousseau's philosophy and his ideas as developed in the *Emile* see revealed for the first time some simple concepts which would throw at least a faint light on our own basic concepts like *Brahmacharya*, *Gurubhakti* etc.

It is not, therefore, to Russia, America or England that we have to turn to see common aspects between the soul of India and what is most genuine and true in the thought of modern humanity. Hidden away from the glamour of modernism there is a thin line of thought which brings us back to our own national experience, and this is to be sought in the line of thought that unites Rousseau through Kant and Froebel, through Pestalozzi and Fichte to modern idealists like Giovanni Gentile.

Every patriotic Indian talks of education along national lines and refers to the ancient forest schools of our country. There are a few catch-words like *Gurukula Vāsa* on which he keeps harping; but the great task of formulating educational theory still remains to be accomplished. We are still in the stage of slogans in this matter. Tacitly we look at each other and seem to think that we understand what we want but when it comes to a formulation of accepted notions we get lost in banalities and contradictions. Indian educational practice, even in national institutions, is at that precarious stage in which we intend to do one thing but are actually compelled to do quite another.

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Dr. Zia-uddin Ahmad has put his finger on a difficulty peculiar to this country when he says : "No sound system of education can be devised till we answer the question, 'Who is responsible for our education ? The State or the people?' " The joint responsibility of the State and the people means," he goes on to say, "dyarchy in education, which is bound to be even more disastrous than dyarchy in political administration, for its 'evil effects do not become visible to the people till it is too late to find a remedy."¹ Popular sentiment grows in one direction till it attains a point in which action is likely to follow and then opposite forces push it back, till another wave brings it again forward so that between advancing and receding impulses the matter of national education remains without proper formulation.

What is it that can save us from the disastrous effects of dyarchy in education ? It is evidently a love of investigation for its own sake. Investigation has to be undertaken free from any kind of religious or political bias, in what is called an 'objective' spirit. There must be an institution which will devote itself to the organization and codification of existing knowledge and which will be neutral in politics and unprejudiced in matters religious. Vague spiritual values, which might easily degenerate into a sort of sentimentalism, must be carefully avoided in the study of educational problems of our country. Too easy generalizations, convictions based on metaphors and analogies, acceptance of particular schools of orthodox thought which conduce to so much vagueness in educational literature, taking the end however noble to justify the means, all these have to be vigilantly fought against.

When the foundations of a national institute which would undertake to study educational problems impartially have been laid, we shall begin to witness the rare phenomenon of the growth of educational thought from stage to stage. Concepts will be piled on concepts. The publications and discussions will make it clear that we have been traversing definite ground. The ground once conquered will then be annexed and made part of the stock of knowledge that is accepted. Consensus of opinion then grows beyond that stage and as a result of decades at least of persistent effort, we shall have worthy basic concepts which shall furnish the administrators and statesmen with definitions and programmes which will help them in the task of expending large sums of money at their disposal in a more intelligent and consistent way than hitherto.

Educationists should not blame administrators for not spending the large amounts that governments budget year after year more intelligently

1. Cf. P 5, *System of Education* Longmans, 1929

according to them. The task of making this possible is mainly that of educationists themselves, and so long as educationists themselves fail and shirk their responsibility the difficulty is bound to remain. Enthusiastic young men in India are ready to put the blame on our lack of political independence in this country. It is patriotic to feel keenly for independence but it should not be an excuse for educationists to shirk their responsibilities in formulating what they want in clear-cut terms.

Aimlessness in education is a defect which is found even in countries which enjoy full political freedom. This is due to lack of a philosophical back-ground. England itself can be cited as an example. Professor J. Welton, an Eminent English authority on education, himself states: "There is no longer a universally recognized circle of knowledge constituting a liberal education preparatory to specialist studies, as there was in the middle ages. Nor is there general agreement. . . . as to the end that should be sought by education as a whole." Mr. Maxwell Garnett, another author, states the same fact more pointedly when he makes the statement: "The most easily observed characteristic of English education at the present time is perhaps its aimlessness."⁽¹⁾

That India enjoys good company in this matter should not blind us to the necessity of making a real beginning in the direction of formulating our own ideas in respect of education. Dyarchy in the thought world can exist even when we have political independence. There is no excuse, therefore, for delay in the initiation of this very important item in our plans for reconstruction, and if some plead absence of independence for delay, they have to be considered as those who shirk their responsibilities.

One difference between England and India in this matter is that India has the advantage of a rich heritage of fundamental educational ideas which are sound. The first task would be to restate these concepts in modern form and bring them in line with the best trends of educational thought available to us now. Much that is tacitly implicit has to be made explicit. Ideas that have been expressed in the form of aphorisms have to be elaborated. Terms have to be correlated and made into more standardised expressions so that educational parlance would rid itself of the bane of allegory, allusion and figure of speech and develop a set of terms which, though not scientific in the strictest sense, may lend themselves to be used as such.

(1) Cf. P. 19, *Education and World-citizenship* by J. C. M. Garnett; Cambridge University press.

Precious indications of the right philosophy of Indian education are to be found scattered in the ancient writings. Valuable indications about the object and aims of education are found in the *Mimāmsa Sāstras* and in the *Bhagavad Gīta*. The opening passages of the *Taittriya Upanishad*, the *Dharma Sāstras* and the *Purāṇas* and books like the *Gnānavasiṣṭha* contain, when studied and elaborated, a theory of education that will be found to be sound in the best modern sense. This is a proud claim that we have been making for many decades now but one which we have not seriously tried to substantiate to the present day. It is true that occasional articles appear in some of the Indian magazines from time to time.¹ If one looks between the lines in such literature, one invariably finds that we are still on the defensive merely. With the impact of Western civilization our own standards became questioned by ourselves and we are still answering half-wakefully the question, "Is India civilized?" forgetting that we have been answering this long enough and that it is now high time that we moved on to the next item on the programme.

A retrospective survey of educational thought in India from the earliest times has to be undertaken first. A national philosophy of education will emerge out of the past when we re-state it in objective terms and relate it to the future of the nation. Prospective considerations have to be given as much importance in the matter as retrospective ones. More and more groups should discuss such questions so that a proper philosophy of national education may emerge out of the systematic thinking of the nation.

1. Cf, *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society* for April 1943 contains a learned article on 'Education in the Vedic Age' by Dr. Kunhan Raja. Such articles have appeared many times in different forms but we have not travelled appreciably beyond taking an apologetic attitude in defending ancient education.

Surpanakhamka

BY PROF. K. R. PISHAROTI, M.A., Ernakulam

It was the third of July, 1942, the wet, very wet July. I happened to be in my native village on family business. It was the last day of the *Kūttu* in the local temple, and the *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* final was to be staged that night. The scene proposed was the *Surpanakhamka* a scene from the *Āscaryacūḍāmani* of Saktibhadra, the earliest South Indian to write a Sanskrit Drama. The opportunity was too tempting to be missed, and so despite a heavy day, despite a bleak and rainy night, and despite the prospect of standing half-naked throughout the night—for shirts are not allowed inside the temple theatre—I got ready and accompanied by a few friends, proceeded to the temple, which we reached just a couple of minutes before the play started.

It was the same old theatre, where, during our school-days, we had for the mere fun of it spent many similar nights without, however, understanding much of what was taking place on the stage. The conditions of the theatre were exactly what they were, when I last witnessed a performance there in July 1935; the same grand, but ill-kept, theatre, the same familiar, but dirty, seating arrangements of a graded sort—Brahmins squatting down on the raised flat in front of the stage and the other caste Hindus standing on the three sides, some leaning on the pillars and others sitting in the shadow thereof—the same feeble, apparently feeble, lighting, the same musical accoutrements, and, what was most surprising, the same set of actors, the principal one being kind enough to come out of the green room and greet me. As usual on such occasions, there was some attempt at decorating the stage—the corners with plantains, bearing clusters of fruits, the sides with green leaves, and the floor of the stage with geometrical designs, made of rice flour paste. The usual instrumental music of the *Milāvu*, worked by a *Nambiyār*, who sat within a railed enclosure at the back of the stage, and of the cymbal, sounded by a *Nāniyār* who sat on a mat on the floor of the stage to the right of and at right angles to the actors, was enhanced on the occasion by the addition of a drummer, sounding his *Iṭakka*, who stood at the back of the stage in a line with the *Nambiyār*, and a bugler of a stripling lad who stood by his side, but below the stage on the floor. The first coming in of the principal characters was marked by the presence of an improvised curtain, behind which they performed what is termed *Maravilekriya*,—some conventional

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steppings and floundings, as the orthodox dramaturgical ritual demanded, which it appeared to us, could well have been done in front of the curtain.

II

The actual acting began just a little after 10 p.m. The piece staged was familiar to the whole orthodox people—the ravishing of Rāma by Sūrpañakha. The scene opens with the appearance of Rāma, the hero of the piece, who gives a picture of the happy life he is leading at Pañcavati on the banks of the Godaveri. This is termed *Nirvahana*, during which he incidentally refers to the baseless nature of the sages' warning, regarding the presence of Rākshasas and Rākshasis in the region. This serves as an excellent introduction to the audience to tune themselves up to the context of the story. As Rāma dilates on the perfect poise and happiness of his new life in those glorious surroundings, Sūrpañakha enters in the garb of a siren of ravishing beauty and makes love to him. Rāma very courteously says that he is a married man living with his wife under a vow of *Brahmacarya* and so directs her to his brother Lakshmaṇa. The scene with Lakshmaṇa is not shown on the stage, but the siren is disappointed and so returns to Rāma to be sent back again to his brother to be again refused and repulsed. Insulted by this continued rebuff, the indignant Sūrpañakha decides upon abducting Lakshmaṇa. Then the two enter the stage, Sūrpañakha in her real demoniac form, the one dodging the other, and finally the monstress catches hold of the prince and rushes away. Now Rāma enters the stage, expresses his sorrow and anxiety, regarding his brother's fate, and wishes to rush forward for his help. But Sita—this character does not appear on the stage—pleads that she should not be left alone; Rāma is now in a serious dilemma. In the bitterness of his poignant sorrow he feels the futility of his strength and sheds bitter tears. Happily, then, he sees his brother Lakshmaṇa, rushing backwards to him, his sword dripping in blood. He has wreaked vengeance on the terrible she-monster for her wickedness by cutting off her nose and ears, instead of killing her, which is prohibited by *Sāstras*. Rāma feels elated and happy. But the happiness is soon broken, for terrific screams and wailings reach their ears, and before long, the disfigured monster, bathed in blood and swaying to and fro in anger and pain, slowly makes her way towards the brothers. This forms the most impressive and imposing part of the representation.

The struggle between Sūrpañakha and Lakshmaṇa is not shown on the stage. The former makes her exit from the theatre by a back door and proceeds to the southern *Nāṭa* of the temple, in front of which to the

right stands the theatre with its main entrances north and south. The weird figure starts back to the theatre from there in a procession lit up by the lurid glow of torch lights, every now and then set ablaze by resin powder, and announced by her own piercing screams and wails, which touch the chord of fear in the on-looker. It does not enter through the main door, but through a side entrance set in the west, facing the stage; it jumps, as if it were, into the theatre, passes slowly enough through the very midst of the audience, seated on the raised flat, and, reaching the stage, falls prostrate, in pain and exhaustion, before the wondering brothers. In sheer disgust the brothers fall back apace; their suspicions are now confirmed: they recognise Sūrpaṇakha and naturally are not sorry for the action taken. The revolting figure, then, tells them in howling accents that she has mighty brothers who would not leave unavenged the insult and injury done to her and that they shall thereafter know no peace in their life. Very truly, no doubt, was the prophecy fulfilled. Then the monster disappears into the green-room, and the two brothers, buckling up for anything that the future may bring them, also leave the stage. Thus concludes the ghastly scene which for emotional effect has few parallels on our stage.

When allowance is made for the maintenance of orthodox stage traditions, for the limitations of time and place, and for the antique character of the stage equipments, the costume and make-up of the characters and the mode of acting, the performance must, on the whole, be pronounced to be a success: it is an unqualified success, if it is to be measured in terms of *Rasa* delineation.

III

The costume and make up of the characters that appear on the stage may now be noticed. Four characters appear on the stage: Rāma and Lakshmaṇa and Sūrpaṇakha, first in the garb of a siren and then in her real demoniac form. Sita plays a minor part and does not appear on the stage, in this case probably as a matter of character economy. But it deserves to be pointed out that even when she has a major part to play, this character never appears on the stage: that, it is reported, is the running tradition of the local stage. This is an important aspect, but the actors are not able to give any explanation for this. The costume and make-up of Rāma and Lakshmaṇa are alike. The face is painted green which is given a white border with rice flour about a third of an inch in width. Black unguent is applied to the lashes and the eye-lids are pencilled

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dark, while the eyes themselves are reddened. The lips are painted deep red, and the ears are adorned with *kundalas* below and *cevikkuttu* above, the latter representing Sirisa flower, as our actors would have it. The head carries a two-piece head-gear, called in the local vernacular *Kolappurakkettu*—literally the tank-shed build, so called from its shape. It is composed of two circular discs, each a foot in diameter, set horizontal-wise over a tight-fitting cap. The front piece which has peacock feathers stuck into it rises about a third of its area gracefully over the forehead, the front being decked with glass pieces of varied hues, the whole looking like a diadem. The back disc is attached to the front one above the crown of the head and comes down over the nape of the neck, when the head is held erect. This head-dress which is the type prescribed for all heroes probably imitates a helmet; it is not an erect crown, adding to stature; but a flattened coronet, giving solidity to the character. In any case, the head-dress sits well on the character. The arms are left bare, except for sandal paste and *Keyuras* at the wrists and epaulettes at the shoulders. The body has a jacket of red colour—this is the colour prescribed—with horizontal dark stripes, and over it was worn what purports to be a necklace—a stiff one, carrying metallic discs, called *Polambu*. There was the inevitable *Channa-vira*, held in front by a protruding metallic disc and over the shoulders was thrown a single *Uttariya* as well as a garland, the latter being made of red-cloth in the case of Rāma and of *Cetti* flowers in the case of Lakshmaṇa. Over the knickers are worn a skirt of thick cotton, the flounces behind about the buttocks imitating wave-crests, while in front hangs a triangular piece of coloured cotton scarf, known a *Katisūtra*. The legs are bare but for sandal paste and no anklets are worn, possibly because in this case there are no flouncing movements of legs and dance. Such, in brief, is the nature of the costume and make up of the two male characters that appear on the stage. One must necessarily admit that the facial get-up and head-dress are designed with a view to aid facial expression of the varied emotions and are, indeed, artistic enough to please the eye, while the flounces behind add grace and dignity to bodily movements.

The peculiar feature of the costume of the siren is the splash of deep ochre colour: the scarf over the head, the facial paint, and the petticoat all are of the same colour. Such, I am told, is the make up of all female characters that appear on the temple stage. The deep ochre of the face is relieved by the dark pencilling of the lashes and eye-lids as well as by the deep dark spots here and there on the face. Similarly, the ochre colour of the scarf is relieved by a deep dark border. A petticoat of the

same colour covers the breasts, which is held in position by strings tied together behind. The ears are adorned by *Kundalas*, while the hands are left bare, but for the anachronism of glass bangles, which the actor presumably failed to remove at the time of dressing. From the waist downwards, it was the usual Malayali woman's dress and, naturally enough, for women characters are generally impersonated by women. One cannot help remarking that the costume and make-up of the woman characters, as devised by *Cākyārs*, leave much to be desired. They are neither artistic nor graceful in any sense of the term, and we cannot help expressing the opinion that it was thoroughly disappointing, however much it might have been in consonance with local stage traditions. One is here reminded of the ancient poet's statement, *pūrāṇāmityeva na sādhu sarvam*.

On an entirely different plane and in striking contrast to this was the make-up of Sūrpaṇakha in her demoniac form. It was a rolling mass of dark, deep dark colour from head to toe, the blackness of the face being relieved by white *Trisūla* marks (¶) and the exceeding reddened lips and mouth which is kept, more often than otherwise, open. The head-dress has been designed with more than ordinary care. It is made of a particular kind of grass, known as *Nāñiñāṇam-pullu*, which is dull black in colour and hence forms a happy contrast to the jet black colour of the face and body. The bottom and top are squares, the lower one being smaller than the upper one: thus it presents four faces, each one being a trapeze in shape. The head-dress is more than half a foot in height and is adjusted to a tight-fitting cap, while the inter-space between the grass is sprayed with red and white flowers, which sparkle in the dim light of the stage. The body is covered by clothes again deep dark in colour, and about the bosom are held up false breasts, protruding about a foot. The costume and make-up of this character thus are eminently satisfactory, both intrinsically and artistically, and it is certainly doubtful if anything more successful could be devised.

This character introduces two interesting variations in our stage tradition. In the first place, this character is impersonated by a male as against the usual rule of women impersonating female characters; and the reason for the violation is said to lie in the fact that the character has but little feminine element, characterising it. In other words, the convention actually must have arisen as a result of the part to be played and the violent emotions which sway, and are evoked by, the character. The second equally important feature that deserves to be noticed is the use of the

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local vernacular on the stage, which is also condemned by the local stage conventions, except in the case of the *vidūshaka*, who presents to the audience a comic version of the lyric stanzas, sung by the *Nāyaka*. Why should this character alone of all characters use the local *patois* is not very clear? It certainly arises not out of a desire to make the utterances intelligible to the audience, since this difficulty exists in the case of other characters also. Even in this scene in the garb of the siren, Sūrpanakha uses only the usual *Prākrit*, as she makes love to Rāma. Again, the use of the local vernacular does not serve any comic purpose, for the main sentiment of the occasion is *Bibhatsa* and *Bhayānaka*. And lastly, it deserves to be pointed out that the character uses the vernacular only in her asides and comments, but not in the speech directly addressed to the brothers. The only possible explanation that suggests itself to us for the use of what the *Cākyars* call *Malayālam Prākrit* is to assume that the character is uttering her thoughts to herself in her own language, i.e. her mother tongue. Malayalam is a Dravidian language, and in the terminology of philologists, it is the language of the original Dravidians of the land, to which race belong Rākshasās.

It has already been said that lighting arrangements in the theatre are of a primitive kind, consisting of a big brass lamp, carrying wicks all around, fed with cocoanut oil. But, for that reason, it is not to be condemned. The lamp lights up the whole area with a suffused light, and the stage proper has that amount of light essential for lighting up the costume and the facial expression of the actors, but not more than enough. And this, be it noticed, forms an adequate measure of protection. It is interesting to point out that the *Piṭham*, on which the main characters sit and which serves as the throne or couch or seat, is slightly higher than the usual seats: its height is adjusted to the height of the lamp, so that, when a character sits on it, the light of the lamp falls directly on the face. It appears that a better system of lighting cannot be introduced on the orthodox stage, if the rigid conventions of costume and make-up are to be kept up intact.

IV

As regards acting, it is as usual the happy combination of bodily movements, facial expression, gesture language and recitation, designed to give full and adequate expression to the theme and emotions of the play; and these to some extent compensate for the primitive nature of the representation, in so far as modern critics are concerned. There is, however, a large element of the conventional in them, and the result is

that the action appeals only to a select circle. For, as matters now stand, facial expression and gesture language are lost upon the present day audience, who are presumably satisfied with the realistic representation of the story. This attitude probably accounts for the popularity of *Kūtiyāttam* even today. *

The piece enacted is a small one, and yet the action runs from 10 P.M. to 5 A.M. that is nearly seven hours. There is certainly no relation between the story staged and the time taken. This, however, is the result of the *modus operandi*. As our stage convention would have it, every sentence or statement undergoes a three-fold representation—first *Āṅgika*, then *Vācika* side by side with *Āṅgika* and then *Āṅgika*. Since the representation has its appeal restricted only to a select circle, this triad representation may well be avoided, though possibly it was originally introduced to get over the difficulty of appealing to the audience through the medium of Sanskrit language. This aspect apart, the order of procedure could be improved, as it strikes us. The *Vācika-āṅgika* mode could well have preceded the *āṅgika* mode, for that would have put the hearer in touch with the theme. Here also possibly the existing order may have resulted from the difficult of language. Coming to the *Vācika-āṅgika* mode, one feature deserves to be condemned: the recitation has been long drawn out, and it strikes one as being quite unnatural. Presumably it has had to be drawn out, so that the *Vācika* expression might chime with the *Āṅgika*. This drawing out of the syllables and words of the text produces a very awkward impression on the listener: it is literally murdering language, as musicians very often do. This feeling persists, despite the fact that the *āṅgika* representation has been very graceful. I have had occasion to discuss the matter with the chief actor. He agrees with me that the recitation, as it now obtains, is bad enough, but he is of opinion that it was due to lack of *lāghava* on the part of the actor in so far as *Āṅgikābhinaya* is concerned and of training in the musical intonation of the verses. If the verses are to be recited in the *Rāgas*, prescribed for them, this feeling would not creep in, but unfortunately, he added, the present actors do not care to acquire proficiency in either. The present day recitals may or may not be technically correct, but they certainly are void of all musical quality: that is how it strikes a layman. The actors can and should introduce more and more music into their recitals. The introduction some real musical element and the cutting down of the time of representation seem to be essential, if the art is to be made more appealing, if the art has to be revitalised.

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There seems to run throughout the whole performance one defect, and that lies in the attitude of the actors themselves and the audience with reference to the show. The latter takes to it as a matter of mere fun and frolic—as an opportunity to escape from the humdrum of every day life. This attitude may not deserve so much of condemnation, particularly because the action has its appeal only to a select circle of people. The former takes to the performance as a matter of votive offering, which they have to perform in lieu of certain perquisites they have been receiving from the temple from times of yore—a votive offering made in all good faith, albeit without any interest, much less artistic interest. The actors conduct themselves as mere automatons most mechanically, and human interest and human touch seem to be wanting everywhere with, however, one honourable exception—the chief actor's impersonation of Sūrpaṇakha in her real garb. One would certainly wish that the performance was a little more *human* and that the actors showed more human interest in what they were acting. It seems a pity that they take so little interest in the exquisite art, of which they and none else are the chief custodians; and, indeed, there is nothing from which art suffers more than from the indifference of the artists themselves. True it is that they have ample justification for their attitude—the general lack of encouragement and appreciation, why, the lack of even an enlightened audience: but it must be pointed out that a scholarly appreciation of their art is impossible so long as they confine their art to within the four walls of a sacred temple, which denies access to the general public. In any case, something more is possible, if the actors themselves are prepared to move a little forward even within the limits that a rigid convention has imposed upon them.

V

We have in the preceding pages described the local acting of the *Sūrpaṇakhaṁka*, as we saw it and as we felt about it. What is the artistic value of the representation? This is a question that I asked myself as I returned home in the small hours of the morning,—indeed an important question, particularly because in *Kūṭiyāttam* is preserved for us the earliest form of dramatic expression we have available in the whole of India.

The answer to this question, however, depends upon how we interpret the nature and value of artistic expression. Fine arts, we hold, transfer to and re-create in the critic, through the help of a specific medium, the emotions experienced by the artist. The artist may or may

not in all cases be conscious of the communicative value of his expression, but, in so far as the dramatist is concerned, he is fully and acutely conscious of the communicative value of his expression. The choice of the medium of expression is decided by the genius of the artist: he may choose language, stone, canvass or his physical body, and, according as the medium differs, the sensory organ appealed to also differs. Emotion is aroused by an appeal to one or other of the sensory organs, and, the greater the number of organs appealed to, the greater and the more successful is the appeal. Of the varied organs of sense, the sense of touch and smell and taste do not generally come within the purview of fine arts generally, whether of expression or reception. These have their appeal to the other two organs of sense, the sense of hearing and of sight. Some arts appeal only to the sense of hearing, others only to the sense of sight, while still others appeal both to the sense of hearing and of sight. Drama belongs to the last category, and in this respect it stands superior to other arts. Whatever the medium chosen and whatever the sensory organ appealed to, the artist's expression is conditioned by the conventions and the technique of expression in that particular medium. Thus, in the realm of poetry, the poet is a victim to the theories of poetry, even if it be only to a certain extent. Similarly, the dramatist is a slave to the theory and practice of dramaturgy; and his art is further conditioned by the equipment of the stage for which and the standard of culture of the people for whom he intends his work of art. Thus every variety of art has certain restrictions imposed upon it on the creative side. It is equally restricted on the receptive side: for a knowledge of the technique through which and the limitations under which the artist works and expresses himself is essential for the critic, if he would have the artist's experiences transferred and recreated in him in any really appreciable measure. Thus every variety of art-expression is restricted both on the expressive side and on the receptive side. And, consequently, art has its appeal always limited to a select circle: it appeals only to the *Sahridaya*—one who has proper training in the art and its technique and who, by continued practice, can tune up his mind to receive the artist's experiences conveyed in that particular mode of expression. And this, be it noted, is especially true of dramatic expression.

With a view to make his expression as complete and rich and wide as possible, the dramatist introduces certain adventitious aids in furtherance of his expression. Thus, he makes his characters re-live in flesh and blood, their costume and make-up suggesting their rank in life, their

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outlook on life, their dominant trait of character, and their greatness and nobility or their depravity and meanness. He introduces music and dance to render pleasing the communicativeness of the activity. And, lastly, he magnifies expression of ideas and emotions by a three-fold repetition—by the language of poetry, by the language of gestures and by the movements of face and body. With these aids he tries, and that successfully, to make his art appeal to the eyes and ears simultaneously, though at the same time, this method tends to curb the play of the imagination on the part of the critic: for it converts the ideal into the real, and in all such conversion there is curtailment.

Against this theoretical background we may view the staging of the *Sūrpanakhamka*. Here was a representation of one incident in the life of Rāma, as the poet conceived it. Three characters appeared on the scene who re-lived their lives. Their dress and make-up, their actions and activities, their ideas and ideals, their outlook on life—all these are shaped by the artist, who is conditioned by the traditions and conventions of the local stage-art, handed down from a remote antiquity and continued even today in more or less the same primitive form. And the life they are made to re-live is not the usual one: like everything else on the stage, it is unreal, non-normal, *alaukika*. Again, their ideas and emotions are expressed in a two-fold way. The ideas are first expressed in the language of poetry and then again in the language of gestures, and the emotions, first by facial expression and then by bodily movements; and both these are later emphasised and magnified by the repetition of the words, the gestures and the movements of face and body—the whole expression being set against an *alaukika* background. The different modes of expression of the ideas and emotions, *which stand in the relation of cause and effect* usually not noticed, at least not realised as such, re-create in the *Sahrdaya* emotional experiences, similar in kind to those originally experienced by the artist himself, and he becomes steeped in pleasure, in ecstatic bliss through the successful blending into a unified whole of the different media of language and of gestures of face and of body, into one expression, which combines in it the music of voice and the grace of movement, all set in the world of the stage. Divorced from the everyday realities of life, each one of these is in itself a source of pleasure, of course with an intellectual bias, and their successful blending produces emotional or aesthetic bliss—in which process the intellectual element recedes into the background: but at the same time its presence in the background prevents the recreated emotional experience from losing itself in sensuous indecision. The value

of this emotional experience is enhanced by the fact that here there is a process of edification, for emotional experiences tend to purify the emotions by the process of *catharsis*, as it is termed in the west, or *Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, as it is known among Indian *Ālamkārikas*. And, indeed, in this particular case, the process of recreation has been rendered much easier, since the representation has been hung on to a *Paurāṇik* incident, well-known to the audience; and this enables them to concentrate better on the art of the artist.

If, then, from the final unity of the impressions produced and one's responses to the same, one may generalise, *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* immerses the audience in pleasure by the process of recreating in them certain experiences of an emotional character by the presentation in time and space of a dramatised version of a *Paurāṇik* incident in a garb and form that is non-normal and for that reason more pleasing to the Hindu audience. This pleasure is *intellectual* in character to those who are not well trained in the *modus operandi* of the local stage and the local technique of the professional actor; but it becomes raised up to the *emotional* to those who are well-versed therein. And, indeed, this judgment cannot be too wrong, for every work of art is a particular case and has to be judged as such.

VI

We shall not better conclude this short notice than with a reference to *Kathakali*. Even a cursory glance would convince one that the make-up and costume of the *Kathakali* actor are based upon the simple mode of the *Cākyars*, only it has been made more impressive and, if we may say so, more ponderous. The facial get-up has been made very complex by the addition of white paints in *relievo* and of knobs to emphasise the dominant, traits of the various casts of characters; and this has been rendered possible, since the *Kathakali* actor has not to open his mouth. The head gear which is of the standing erect type, as compared with that of the *Cākyar*, adds certainly to the stature of the character and has been necessitated by the facial get-up. The costume and ornamentation have been considerably increased to make up for the increased stature, though one might suspect that the wealth and richness of the same probably hamper free movements. The skirt of the *Kathakali* actor is no doubt more attractive and afford better scope for floundings, and this is naturally essential in view of the larger element of bodily movements in the art-expression of the *Kathakali* actor, while the use of the silver nails on the fingers adds greatly to the grace and beauty of the gestures. On the whole, the costume and get-up of the *Kathakali* actor better capture the attention of the audience. As compared

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with this, those of the *Cākyar* is much simpler and less conventional. Naturally, the former involves greater physical strain for the actors, and hence we find certain innovations made to minimise it, chiefly in the development of the musical accoutrements. In the *modus operandi* also there is a specific difference. The *Kathakali* actor never opens his mouth except to utter his war-cry, and he naturally cannot open his mouth on account of the larger element of facial make-up—paints in *relievo*, borders and knobs. As a result, all linguistic expression is done by the musician, and, because he is a professional, it is done in a musical way. The actor confines himself to the expression of ideas and of emotions. The former he does by means of the gesture language and the latter by facial expression and flouncing steps and bodily movements; and these have been naturally elaborated. The language of the hands he has considerably improved, rather magnified, by the introduction of symbols for nicer and finer shades of meaning and the extension of the space within which his hand poses work. His hand poses which extend to the area within his extended arms, instead of the elbow limits, and the dropping out of the *pratyayas*, *i. e.*, conjugational and inflectional terminations, these have helped him to keep pace with the musician's musical recital of the poetry of the drama. The elaborate ornamentation of the face, which is different for different primary emotions, helps emotional expression by the face to a greater degree. Hence the blending of expression, both of ideas and of emotions, has been magnified, not by repetition but by extension and elaboration, and this has helped the re-creation of the emotional experiences in the audience to a greater degree. Thus in *Kathakali* we find a deliberate attempt to make the stage more and more appealing to a wider circle of audience, to lift the art from the select circle of the orthodox and make it more entertaining and popular. And this has been rendered easier, since the language has been simplified to some extent by fusing Sanskrit and Malayalam into the happy blend or alloy, called *Manipravālam*. The progress of the art has been so phenomenal in the first hundred years of its existence that, in due course, this became more conventionalised than even *Kūtiyāṭṭam* and would have become bracketed with it, but for the new lease of life given to it by the *Kerala-kalāmaṇḍalam* under the lead of our great national poet-critic-artist, Vallathol. It is to be hoped that *Kūtiyāṭṭam* also will ere long be lifted out of its narrow groove and exclusive environments and made to claim its rightful place among the sister arts of the land. May that day dawn in the nearer, than in the remote, future is the prayer of the writer!

The Divine Warrior

BY DILIP KUMAR ROY

(Rendered from Sri Narayanprasad's martial song in Hindi,
"Tuma to chale ho yuddhamē jaya prāpta karnē-kō yahān")

March to the battle-front and wrest a noble victory here and now,
In loyalty to God's own call with soul's irrevocable vow :
"For the Truth Supreme I count no cost and for His heights my life I stake-
To Immortality through shipwreck and all for His Grace's sake."

When thou hast flung the gauntlet down to phalanxed hordes of inky hate,
Be thou a warrior for Love, behold, the hour is big with fate!
How shall he fight for the Lord of lustre whose heart is still the serf of sleep,
With desires unburnt to ash how will he scale ascents so pure and steep?

Crusader! on the Way to Light awake thy fires and forge ahead
To the open, proud and panoplied with courage meet thy foemen dread.

Crusader! on the Way to Light awake thy fires and forge ahead
To the open, proud and panoplied with courage, meet thy foemen dread.

The Story of the Rishi Vidyuccōra

Rendered from Old Kannada by S. MANJANATH, M.A., Tumkur

(Ancient works of sustained prose writing are somewhat of a rarity in Kannada as in other Indian languages. The story herewith given is taken from the famous *Vadžrādhane* by SIVAKOTI ACARYA, a Jain writer of not later perhaps than the 9th century, and is the 13th of the 19 stories contained in that prose classic, which is claimed to be the earliest extant prose work in Kannada Literature. The story is remarkable for its live narrative interest, containing how one who became a saint acted the role of a thief and put himself to test on a youthful brag (with a friend of his boyhood) in fulfilment of a wager.

The story translated here has been edited in Kannada and published in the journal of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat—by Sri D. L. Narasimhachar, M.A., to whom acknowledgment is due.)

Mithila was a city in the country of Vidēha. The King of the city was Vāmaratha, a descendant of Padmaratha. The King and his Queen, Bandhumati, lived in comfort for some years enjoying all the pleasures they desired. The chief police officer of the city was Yamadanda. In the same city there lived a thief of the name of Vidyuccōra. He was well-versed in all the thiefy arts like Jrmbhini, Stambhini, Mōhini, Sarshapi, Talōdghaṭini, Vidyā Mantra, Choornayōga, Ghaṭikāñjana and the like. During nights he stole the accumulated wealth of many in the city and buried it all in a big cave of a hill not far from the city. He closed the opening of the cave with a huge stone. During day time he lived in the ruins of a temple where he transformed himself into a leper by smearing his body with a particular *anjana*. In as ugly a shape and state as his plastic technique enabled him to change himself he produced a disgust in those who saw him and went a-begging from house to house in the city. At nightfall he regained his bright and beautiful natural shape, wore clothes of shining lace, sprinkled on them sweet perfumes, wore a garland round his neck and chewed betel leaves with nuts mixed with the best spices and refined camphor. So arrayed he entered the locality of public women showing to advantage the beauty and majesty of his form and buying with his accumulated wealth the pleasures which women of celebrity and prostitutes and the nobles.

Now it happened that Acyutēndra had presented to King Padmaratha, in admiration of his character, a necklace of great beauty and value called Sarvarujāpahāra. It was a family treasure and King Vāmaratha had come into possession of it. In the seventh storey of the palace was his sleeping apartment in which the King kept the necklace treasured in a small box and worshipped it with perfumes, *akshata* (coloured rice), flowers, incense and lights. One day Vidyuccōra applied a particular *anjana* to his eyes and rendering himself invisible entered the sleeping room of the King, opened the box and carried away the sacred necklace. He buried it as usual in the cave beyond the city and reassumed the guise of a leper.

The next day dawned. The King could not find the necklace. He sat on his throne and sent for his chief police officer and said to him :

"Yamadanda, a thief has been stealing the wealth of the brahmins, the foreigners, the prostitutes and the farmers who dwell in the city. You have not caught him. You seem to do nothing in the matter. The thief has entered my bedroom, opened my box and carried away the precious heirloom presented to us by Acyutēndra. Find the thief quickly and bring back the necklace. Else, I shall inflict on you the punishment that the thief deserves."

The officer said in reply : "Lord, give me time for seven days. If I do not bring the thief by then you may deal with me as it may please you."

The King agreed and the officer left the palace. In the city Yamadanda searched through the streets of prostitutes, the shops, markets, temples, parks and *vihāras*. In the suburbs and neighbouring towns he effected a search for six days without rest or relaxation of effort. He could not discover the thief. On the seventh day Yamadanda watched the leper as he went out of the ruined temple. He saw Vidyuccōra leaping over a trench using the art of a thief. Yamadanda concluded that this leper was the thief he was in search of all these days. Vidyuccōra protested loudly to Yamadanda who captured him, took him to the palace and to the King, and charged him with all the thefts in the city. The leper said : "Lord, the whole city knows that I am not a thief. The police officer who has not been able to catch the real thief is afraid for his own life. He has captured a poor citizen who lives begging in the city and has offered him to death." Yamadanda who was fully versed in all the arts of catching a thief said to the King : "This man transforms himself during the night and

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steals the city's wealth. During day he takes on the guise of a leper. I shall give you such proof that you may not believe him." He took a *pratighuṭikāñjana* and applied it to the eyes of Vidyuccora who regained his naturally beautiful and bright form. The thief remarked: "Lord, this man is skilled in the use of *anjanas*. He is a wizard and can transform any man into any shape and form." The officer said that he would experiment upon others and show to the King the work of the *anjanas*. With the permission of the King he brought women from inside the King's palace and applied the particular *anjanas* to their eyes. All of them looked like lepers. Then he applied the *pratighuṭikāñjana* and they regained their own beautiful forms. The King was convinced that Vidyuccora was the thief and ordered Yamadanda to punish him as befitted his crimes. Yamadanda took the thief home. It was a cold night in the month of Māgha. The thief was punished with thirty-two kinds of punishment. He endured them all with great calmness and loudly protested that he was not the thief and that the officer was killing him because he had power to do so.

2

Yamadanda himself was now convinced that this man was not the thief he was after. At sunrise he went to the palace and reported to the King that Vidyuccora could not be the thief for he had endured all the thirty-two kinds of torture inflicted on him. He asked the King to deal with him as he pleased as he had failed in his office. The King ordered that Yamadanda should now be taken to the place of execution and be impaled for inefficiency and failure. The King's servants accordingly took Yamadanda to the place of execution. Vidyuccora appeared there in his beautiful, bright form and prevented them from punishing Yamadanda. He told them that the police officer was as bad as dead as they had brought him to the *shoola*. He prayed that he might be given a few minutes of private talk with the officer. The King's agents left them alone for a while during which they were able to overhear this bit of conversation.

"Yamadanda, do you remember that while we were young we two studied under the same *guru*? Do you remember the vow I took in Nandanavana—that without any fault of yours I could get you killed or stop your getting killed? Do you remember my vow or do you not?" Yamadanda: "I remember the vow very well."

Vidyuccora: "Are you dead now or dying, or alive?"

Yamadanda: "Lord, you have won; I am beaten; I am dead."

The servants of the King and the citizens could not understand these words; they were surprised at this conversation. Vidyuccōra turned to the servants of the King and said: "Take us both to the King. In the presence of the King there shall be a conversation between us two. If after my representations the King's pleasure should still be that Yamadanda deserves death, may it be so. For the Niti Sāstra says that no man shall be killed unless he has been given three chances to pray to the King."

The servants took both of them to the King as requested and reported that Vidyuccōra would not allow them to punish Yamadanda. The King asked him to explain his conduct. Vidyuccōra said: "Lord, it is even as your officer has reported to you: Yamadanda is free from all taint of guilt or crime. I shall confess myself to you. During nights I move about in this shape. It is I who have stolen the wealth of the city and the sacred necklace given to you by the gods. During day I take the form of a leper and live in the ruined temple. Have me killed, therefore, for theft. This man is innocent." The King asked him how all the stolen wealth had been disposed of. "I have spent some five or six thousand gold coins on women and buried the rest in a cave." The King ordered him to show the hiding place to the citizens and bring back to him his sacred necklace. The citizens went there well-guarded and took their respective precious things without disturbing what belonged to others. Vidyuccōra returned to the palace and gave the King his sacred necklace. The King asked Vidyuccōra: "How did you endure the thirty-two kinds of torture in this cold night of Māgha?"

3

Vidyuccōra related this story at length:

"Lord, one day, when I was still a young pupil, I went to Sahasrakoota Caityālaya with my teacher. When he was engaged in the worship of God, I sat down near Sivaguptācārya and listened to his reading of the Purāṇas. He described the tortures in hell in the following way: "Those whose conduct is not righteous, who hunt and kill animals, who bring suffering or death to living beings for love, hate or greed, who steal and fall in love with others' wives, who eat and drink what should not be eaten or drunk, who commit the five terrible sins, have no salvation; they take their birth in the seven hells and come to great misery. Their bodies are subjected to many kinds of physical torture. They are not given respite for a moment. Then Sivaguptācārya explained the laws of life that should govern the conduct of a good man. Charity, worship

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of God, virtue and fasting were the four *Srāvaka* dharmās. Those who follow them gain happiness in Heaven. The Ācārya gave a detailed account of the Jaina Dharma and asserted that to follow it was to go to Heaven and to discard it was to go to Hell. When Yamadanda inflicted on me the punishments, I weighed the suffering and misery I was made to undergo at that moment with the pain and misery in Hell. The knowledge that what I was undergoing was only a hundred-thousandth part of the other made me endure it." The King's admiration for his character was immense. He told Vidyuccōra that he would not only not punish such a man but grant him all his requests. Vidyuccōra's only prayer was that his friend Yamadanda should be forgiven. The King's surprise grew; he wanted to know how Yamadanda was his friend; and how a man who had performed *Srāvaka vratās* could become a thief.

Vidyuccōra continued his story:

"In the southern part of Bhārata Kshētra there is the land Ābhira. On the banks of the river Varṇe there is the city of Vēṇātāṭṭa which in its beauty and prosperity is a paradise on earth. The King and Queen who rule over it are Jitasatru and Vijayamati. I am their son. Its chief of police is Yamapāsa, his wife, Nijaguṇa Dēvi. Yamadanda is their son. When we were both only five or six years of age we were taken to a worthy teacher named Siddhārtha and left in his charge for education. In the course of seven or eight years we studied all branches of literature, palmistry, eugenics, politics, medicine and many other branches of learning. Yamadanda went through a course of study and mastered the art of detecting the evils. He became fully versed in *Surakha*. I studied Karapaṭa Sāstra which instructs one in the science and art of stealing. We spent time together in the enjoyment of friendship. One day we went into the forest for pleasure and played about with a ball in what is called the Nandanavana, a beautiful piece of woodland with many kinds of flower and fruit trees. As Yamadanda had learnt the art of catching a thief he disappeared from my sight and was nowhere about. I grew tired of searching for him. When, finally, I met him I said that I would be a thief in the city where he should function as the police officer and drive him to capital punishment. He took the challenge and replied that he would catch me as a thief and having bound my hands and feet would take me to the gallows. We took our vows then and resolved not to forget. A few years passed. My father placed me on the throne and retired to a life of meditation under the guidance of Sṛtasāgara. Yamadanda's father handed over his own office to his son and he too retired to meditation. I was the King of the city then and this man

here the police officer of my city. We lived happily for some time. One day Yamadanda thought that as I, his King, was an adept at the thiefly arts it would be a bad job to be officer in my city. Afraid of me he left my city and took employment under you. My servants searched for him over many cities and kingdoms. At last they traced him to this place. Their report was this: 'Lord, Vāmaratha is the King of the city of Mithila. Yamadanda has accepted office as chief of police under him.' Hearing this, I took my minister, Purushottama, into confidence and told him that I would go to Mithila in disguise and return with Yamadanda. I sent for a *heggade*, an elder of the city, put him in charge of my kingdom and told him that I was going out on some personal work. At dead of night I left the palace in disguise, unnoticed by any. I arrived at this city and according to a plan I stole the wealth of several citizens and brought Yamadanda to the point of death. This is the reason for my stealing things; this is how Yamadanda is my friend. As I am a man of *samyagdrṣhti* your god-protected necklace Sarvarūjapahāra came into my hands. For it would be impossible for men of *mithyādrṣhti* to take it away. King Vāmaratha, then narrated to the assembly how the sacred necklace was given to his great ancestor Padmaratha.

4

Two messengers now arrived with letters and entered the Assembly with the King's permission. When they saw Vidyuccōra they bowed to him and placed the letters before him. The minister for foreign affairs took the letter and read it to the King. It was the letter written by the minister Purushottama and the Heggadē Vajrasēna. They said that the King had now gone out for a good few days and forgotten the affairs of his home. There was none else to rule over the kingdom. Soon after reading the letter he must start back to his kingdom without delay. Vāmaratha found perfect agreement between the contents of the letter and Vidyuccōra's narration. Having no doubts about his being a prince, he ordered that another throne should be placed by his and said to Vidyuccōra: "You are my sister's son. I have eight daughters bearing the names Srimati, Vasumati, Guṇamati, Sulōchanē, Suprabhē, Sukanthē, Sushilē and Manōharē. They are young, beautiful, bright and charming. They are fully accomplished in the arts of reading, writing, arithmetic, music, dancing, painting, fretwork and all the sixty-four branches of learning. Several princes have been sending presents and letters to me asking the hands of my daughters in marriage. I did not approve of them and so did not give them these daughters. You will make a proper husband for them. I give you all my

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eight daughters, and, pray thee to marry them." Vidyuccōra said: "I have wooed one maiden only and will not take others."

King : "Who is the lucky lady?"

Vidyuccōra : "Muktisri is her name and I must marry her."

When he had made that point clear he asked the King to give him back his friend Yamadanda. With the consent of the King they started on camel back and reached their city in the course of a few days.

The next day, Vidyuccōra held a State Assembly to which all princes, officers, queens and princesses had been invited. He said to the grand Assembly that he had become tired of the pleasures of life and desired to retire from all earthly affairs to lead a life of meditation. The people in the Assembly told him that it was not the proper age to take to a life of meditation. For he was only a child yet in the freshness of youth. He should rule as a King for some time more and then think of retiring to a life of meditation.

"If I waited for a future day, I doubt whether I shall be alive or dead. Listen to what is said in the Book of wisdom :

"'To men living a family life, years are like the foam on the waves of the sea ; beauty and youth are like the rainbow in the sky.'

"'If birth, age and death do not occur, if the fear of separation does not get hold of us, if all the things of the world cease to be transient who will not find pleasure in this life?'

" My friends, beauty, youth, brightness, charms, years, wealth, fame and love of men are transient.

"When this body is free from disease, when old age is yet far away, when the senses are yet strong and active, when he has yet years before him, even then the wise man must make great efforts to ennable his soul. What is the good of trying to dig a well when the house is on fire ?

"I forgive all living beings, let them forgive me; I am a friend of all animals ; I hate none."

He forgave all and cleared their doubts. He crowned his eldest son Vidyudanga as the King, made Yamadanda the chief of police, prayed that they should all live in happiness and left the palace accompanied by his Queens and retinue. It was a procession attended with royal honours. On

the way the King gave to all kinds of beggars and blind men gifts that pleased them. When he reached Sahasrakoota Caityālaya, he worshipped the Jina and approached Guṇadhara Ācārya whom he chose for his master. A thousand other men followed his example when he removed from his body all ornaments and abandoned worldly desires and sat down by his master for a life of meditation. Seven hundred women, including the Queen and the ladies of the royal family, also chose with him a life of meditation.

Vidyuccōra stayed with his master for twelve years, learned all that could be learnt and became himself an Ācārya.

Sparrows

BY R. APPALASWAMI

My spirit cleansed in a long spell of sleep,
I feel enlarged by Being's depth and sweep:
And out into the open freedom-borne,
I breathe the sweet, cool glories of the morn.
Wide fields and trees, far hills and the sky seem
An insubstantial and rich-painted dream.
Stray notes of birds suggest the brush at work,
Retouching and removing faults that lurk.
—And like a poem, long in vision known,
The sun glows with ease into roundness blown.

I walk about trusting to chance's lead—
(My life's event aeons ago decreed !)
I come upon a tall lone bamboo-clump
Stuck with green swords aflame with dews; and plump
Sparrows like blossoms shake in a rage of song
And in gay dance millions of moments throng,
Once lived intact from Memory's crevices:
Intuitions, discoveries, ecstasies—
And from the earth all evil melts away.
And life aye morning-fresh knows no decay
Deaths are strait passes into eternity,
And births flood-gates of influent energy.

War and Literature

(Ramble No. 2)*

By R. V. JAGIRDAR, M.A. (Lond.), Dharwar.

Paper is short and war is long. And that, gentle readers, is the moral of the article I intended to write. Intended, please note! for what I might be writing now seems more of an exasperation than an inspiration. Whatever that be, facts would be facts even when there is not enough of paper to publish them.

One such fact is about New Ideas. I believe idealists and historians have great praise and enthusiasm for new ideas. That, however, does not surprise me since neither the idealists nor the historians are sufferers from new ideas. It is the poor writers, my tribe (may it not increase), who chance to entertain new ideas and it is they, therefore, that realise all the inconveniences and discomforts that go with these ideas. For one thing, a new idea is like a spot with a 'wet paint' notice. You cannot sit on it, nor would you feel comfortable to do so near about it. That is why I speak of my tribesmen as poor writers. These are the days when the only thing you can do about new ideas is to sit on them and that is the only thing which a writer can never do.

Fact number two. A writer writes as a woman puts on her finery. No woman would wear all that luxurious plumage just to please herself, much less her husband. She has been enough tortured physically and her husband enough tortured financially, for either of them to enjoy the sight of that dress. That show is meant essentially for others, for the neighbours, for the general public. So is a writer's writing. If it were a question of just pleasing himself, a writer could have smoked a few more cigarettes and finished with it. But no! he writes so that others, his neighbours, his public are pleased and he be also pleased with himself. That fact is another reason for a writer's not being able to sit on any of his ideas, much less on new ideas.

I would be doing an injustice to my clan if I were not to clarify the writer's position a little more. Otherwise a writer would be misunderstood—as himself an irrelevant fact. With a war on, threatening his very existence, could not a writer do a better thing than produce new ideas out of his inkpot? Is it so inevitable? Perhaps not, if one were to speak on principles. But in a world like ours where statesmen find wars inevitable

* The first article appeared in the March issue of "TRIVENI."

why should not a writer too feel his profession inevitable? It is true that the present war is a total war (does it mean total destruction for an entirely new creation?). But does that total include the small fractions in the form of writers? If it does, then the writer, like the other soldiers, demands his equipment of war, *viz.*, pen and paper. And so I come back to where I started from.

Having thus gone round the position, I now proceed straight to my point. That point is that I feel it necessary to complain in the name of my profession. And who would not? Almost every other profession, due to those very war-conditions, has increased its earning potentialities while it is only in ours that the prospects, instead of the markets, are black. Has any writer ever got a black-market price for his writing? If not, why not? That is the question. No, the question is worse than that. The very basis of the profession stands threatened since actually blank paper costs more than when there is something in black written on it!

Black and white! That used to be the figure of,—nay, the flowery—speech to describe writing. But now the paper is white and the market black; with the result that writing, no longer capable of being both black and white, has simply ceased to exist! A writer, if he still must write, will have to think first and then, on second thoughts, will have to keep on thinking. Now he has no choice but to 'write in'. Thinking is thus made not only compulsory but continuous for the poor writer. Is not that unfair? It is not even justice when followers of other professions have simply and merely to act. These acts bring them such immediate profits that their authors have not time enough to think.

A writer's troubles do not end there. Thinking, in itself, would not have been so unwelcome to him since he is used to it all the twenty-four hours of a day for the sake of making both ends, *viz.*, pen and paper, meet. But now it is not that kind or that way of thinking at all. Now he has to keep on thinking till such time as materials to write them on would be made available. This is where thinking not only becomes different but difficult. Either he has to keep on to the same thoughts, in which case he is compelled to grow stale or consistent; or, he has to adjust his thoughts from time to time, in which case at the actual time of writing them down he must be prepared to find nothing definite to write down. And that again would be unfair. In this ever-changing world of ours should we expect only the writer to stagnate in consistency? In these days of equality and democracy should the writer alone be denied equal chances?

WAR AND LITERATURE

What could the poor writer do—one might ask, almost condemning the writer with pity. It is true that writers are really up against Himalayan odds. They have to compete with the nations of the world that might appropriate all available paper to write mutual promissory notes of good-will-to-be and of peace-to-come and all the rest. They have to fight and win a public that prefers to use its ears instead of its eyes and so listens to radio news; a public that finds it more convenient to feel excited than to think and so reads propaganda communiques; a public that thrills and satiates itself on cinema-posters. This fight against the public is most unfair since writers have no better weapon than brain, a heritage of neolithic antiquity, while the public has the benefit of all the modernity that science is capable of, *viz.*, cheapness, smallness, instalment-payments, second-hand dealers, mass ugliness etc. And the heaviest odds of all are still to come. These are the politicians and public leaders. Writers have an arduous job in watching these who talk so loud and so continuously that for ages to come nothing grand or eloquent is left for the writers to write. Universal Love, Universal Brotherhood, Universal bickering, universal this, universal that, and everything universal has been thoroughly, finally, and eternally and eloquently dealt with and disposed of. Perhaps if writers could get a seat on this Universal Committee they might reserve a few convenient topics for writing in the post-war planning. That is a future possibility. For the present, the prospects are such as to justify the writer's pessimism or his campaign of complaint.

Incidentally (and finally), let me say one thing. I do not know what Thecries literary critics would like to advance, but I do feel that in view of the fact of the propaganda and the politician exploiting all emotions from love to war, a kind of 'deterioration' is bound to set in in post-war literature. There is no choice. Either we write now or we live just to repeat and to repent. With this note of warning (which I have to sound to awaken my readers!) I end this analysis before it deteriorates into an apology.

SUBHADRA ! A Threnody

BY T. P. KAILASAM.

I'll never never see my boy again !
I'll never kiss his bonny face again !
A thunderbolt, he spann'd the battle-plain
And cleft the whirling phalanx right in twain !
But my own boy ?—I'll never see again !

I'll never never see my boy again !
I'll ne'er caress his winsome eyes again !
I heard my son's triumphant battle-shout,
I saw his teeming foemen put to rout !
But my own boy ?—I'll never see again !

I'll never never see my boy again !
I'll never hear his gurgling laugh again !
I heard his vanquish'd foemen's dying cries,
I saw a blinding blaze ascend the skies !
But my own boy ?—I'll never see again !

I'll never never see my boy again !
I'll never crush him to my breasts again !
That dazzling shaft on high of purple hue
His death-defying soul it was, I knew !
And knew.—I'd never see my boy again !

* * * * *

My blinding tears, my sobs of soul in pain,
My wails of broken heart,—are all in vain !
Nor all my piteous prayers will regain
Me him whose dirge I moan in one refrain :
I'll never never see my boy again !

Wodehouse the Serious

By V. V. PRASAD, M.A., Berhampore

I

Three years ago, in June 1940, a bald-headed Englishman of middle height and middle age was spending his holiday in his private villa in Northern France along with his North American wife. By an irresistible irony of fate, this man, who, in novel after novel and short story after short story, extricated the hero from a series of tight corners, found himself in a tighter corner than any in which he had previously placed any of his characters.

The Germans took this Mr. Wodehouse prisoner at the time of their advance on Le Touquet. Mrs. Wodehouse escaped arrest by virtue (yes, it was still a virtue) of her American nationality. The humour-king was reported to have told his wife that he hoped to be able to produce a serious novel this time in prison. We then chuckled at the statement because we were reminded of a similar situation in which another distinguished humorist was involved. That was Stephen Leacock, who, as Professor of Political Economy in the McGill University, had to deliver University extension lectures. He rose to address a Texas audience: "Ladies and Gentlemen," he began. There was continued and prolonged laughter—laughter, in anticipation of jokes. Trying to make his position clear, Mr. Leacock announced, "I am serious, gentlemen." What he said later was drowned amidst the loud guffaws of the audience, who hailed it as the most inimitable of his jokes.

Some people say that the very thought of Wodehouse writing a serious novel conjures up a vision before the mind's eye which provokes laughter of the type which Milton described as "holding both his sides." (Readers of the March number of *Triveni* know better than that, for they have seen that all the great Russian Gloom Masters were humorists of the highest order). True, the reputation of the author is against his undertaking such a venture. In fact, P. G.'s project has been described as very good material for the cutest publicity stunt ever planned, in total disregard of the note of sincerity which runs through his words.

To say that whether Wodehouse was serious when he was telling his wife that he wanted to write a serious novel or no can be seen only when we actually read the novel is to try to be too clever: that is, to show a tendency of predicting nothing which is not already known to anyone who has given a moment's thought to such things. The title itself, which has been variously trumpeted as *Money for Jam* and *Money in the Bank*,

encourages us to think that it is a humorous affair: but you may say that it might be due to the fact that we associate Wodehouse with wit. *Money for Jam*, for all we know, may be a masterpiece on Economics. If it had been written by someone else, we could easily have mistaken it for an economic treatise on the barter system: but with Wodehouse, no. For he has written at least three other books, all brimming with humour, bearing similar titles—*Uneasy Money*, *Big Money*, and *Money for Nothing*, not to mention innumerable short stories like *Pots of Money*. A review of *Money for Nothing* published in a Scottish journal contained an unconscious joke (undiscovered so far), for the *Scotsman* said there that Mr. Wodehouse was a public benefactor. It sounds as though the proverbial Scot's love of money has asserted itself and found expression in that sentence, much against his will: but what the brainy Scot had in mind was not the love of filthy lucre but the greater happiness of millions all over the world to which public benefactor Wodehouse was contributing on an unprecedented scale.

II

There is yet another side to the personality of the humorist. He is capable of serious novels just as Bernard Shaw is capable of serious plays. Those who have heard and remembered P. G.'s criticism of the conversation about the all-absorbing topic of the weather will not, in this life-time, enquire about the conditions of the atmosphere, even if all the elemental evidence went to show that the heavens were presently coming down crashing upon us. He says:

All day long, New York, stewing in the rays of a late August sun, had been growing warmer and warmer, until now, at three o'clock in the afternoon, its inhabitants had divided themselves by sort of natural cleavages into two main bodies—the one crawling about and asking those they met if this was hot enough for them, the other maintaining that what they minded was not so much the heat as the humidity.*

The creator of the impeccable Jeeves is one of the most thought-provoking critics of to-day. Most people miss the criticism, for he is, like Chaucer, a perennial fountain of good humour; and his satire on the manners, customs and institutions of modern society is even more subtle than Geoffrey's. Almost every other time we gently smile or laugh aloud, while we read him, there is criticism of a serious tenor.

Wodehousian satire resembles in some respects Tolstoyan satire. Probably, P. G. himself is conscious of this: for he makes one of his characters pick Tolstoy and himself as unique in the firmament of authors.

* *Sam the Sudden*. Page 1.

WODEHOUSE THE SERIOUS

They simply make a remark or two at the most, in the manner of a good cartoonist making his strokes; and everything that is in their minds becomes perfectly clear without the necessity for elaborate, grammatically phrased paragraphs.

In *Piccadilly Jim*, sometimes regarded as his masterpiece, the character of Mr. Crocker is at one place revealed thus:

Mr. Crocker said nothing. He went on saying nothing. Constant practice had made him an adept at saying nothing when his wife was talking.

When Mr. Crocker is told that the game of cricket is exciting, he is pertinently shocked, and delivers himself as follows:

Exciting? How do you make that out? I sat in the bleachers all afternoon, waiting for something to break loose. Doesn't anything ever happen at cricket?

We have the greatest admiration for this American's criticism of cricket, until with one stroke, it is revealed to us that Mr. Crocker is a super-fan of baseball—a game in no way superior to cricket, though, it must be said to its credit, that something or other always seems to happen at baseball. In his shortest novel, *Doctor Sally*, we find that during the 'consultation,' the world-famous nerve-specialist, Sir Hugo Drake, takes a few tips on holding the golf-club from Dr. (Miss.) Sally, and does nothing else. Can a greater admonition of the sporto-maniac possibly exist?

Such is the power of the P. G.-pen. His similes and metaphors are all original and show how deeply he is interested in everything under the sun: heredity, vagaries in proper names, Napoleon (especially Napoleon), druids, dogs, patriotism, cricket and baseball and golf, newspapers (including the columns dealing with the affairs of the heart), to say nothing of things like correspondence courses and American politics.

All of which goes to confirm that Mr. Wodehouse is certainly capable of serious work.

III

Wodehouse was interned in what was once a German Mental Hospital in Northern Silesia, and he could not possibly bring out a serious novel from behind the prison-bars; for at a place where eleven hundred internees were huddled up, consisting of lorry-drivers, coalmen, sea-men and Cambridge graduates, any man with an eye for the ludicrous would find cartloads of material for amusement. And Wodehouses would convert this raw-produce into finished works of humour without fantasy.

As President of the Library of the internment camp, consisting of just one more volume than the ominous thirteen, all written by himself,

Mr. Wodehouse had a moral obligation to his fellows, and he knew it. He had to be constantly replenishing the library with volumes which they would read. As he said, "You can imagine how flattering it is having fourteen men in one room reading your books at the same time." And if he then wrote a serious book, we could imagine how flattering it would have been to have not one man reading that book at any time. At best it might have been a sight of just one man out of one thousand and one hundred and one sulking away his time over it. A fact, which we hasten to admit, the mirth-maker himself had recognised. For if his first book ever written in the padded cell of an asylum were a serious affair, he would have probably driven at least half his fellow-internees mad, thus necessitating the re-conversion of the camp into a mental hospital. If Wodehouse was not serious enough, he would have written his serious book without caring for the consequences. He evidently does not agree with those who think that insane people are laughing matter.

Karel Capek, the distinguished Czech writer who died three years back, has classified books into favourites for different occasions. Utopian novels when you suffer from cold, Edgar Wallace for fever, Dickens and Gogol for chronic illness, and in the hour of death someone after whom he had not made many enquiries, but certainly not Destojevsky.* Inside prisons and during convalescence, Wodehouse is the favourite, though Capek misses him. P. G. heroically faces in *Louder and Funnier* the fact that he is quite a favourite with dog-stealers. Up in the Upper Silesian prison, the humour-king was probably playing the role of the single outstanding figure, the youthful hypnotic Napoleon whose will was law, supplying them with stories, and being supplied with material for more according to the best traditions of the German barter system; though, if journalist Knickerbocker is to be believed, it is doubtful whether jam could be bought by barter, or if it could be got for love or money either. *Money for Jam and Jam for Money* are both slogans which can be, and often are, repeated mentally in countries where both jam and money are scarce.

In the nature of things, therefore, it was not possible for the humorist to write a serious novel from behind the barbed-wiring of the mental asylum. He probably did not know that he would be huddled up with eleven hundred others, that he would be President of the Library there, and that he would be so popular as all that. Just as he did not know he would fall into German hands, you would say. At this rate, what he did not know about the war situation before the fall of France would fill a whole library.

* My father suggests here the humorous, but un-Capekian, addition: "and Bernard Shaw for nervous breakdown."

IV

After a year in the Silesian Camp, Wodehouse began to broadcast a weekly talk over the German Radio. There were questions about it in the House of Commons. Anthony Eden made a statement. *Tit-Bits* published a scurrilous attack on the humorist, saying that he never cared for his friends, that he was a miser, that he never bought a new hat, and so on. The All-India Radio refrained from broadcasting talks on P. G. W. College professors (without listening, of course, to his talks), tried to draw a parallel between P. G. Wodehouse and Ezra Pound (who broadcasts from the Rome Radio). I myself held that as an admirer of Napoleon, he had something in common with Hitler, and also was probably an admirer of Hitler the man.

I have myself listened-in to a couple of his earlier efforts over the Berlin Radio. He was not much of a broadcaster, for he hadn't the voice of a Roosevelt. He said he was being treated well in Germany (they would, when it was a writer of international reputation), that he was growing fatter and fatter every day at such a rapid rate that he was afraid his wife would not be able to recognize him when the war was over.

I myself saw no propaganda in all this: but his broadcasts created quite a flutter. The talks of Wodehouse, the Philosopher, came to be looked upon as something awfully serious. It is as it should be, for had not Plato held that philosophy was the art of the best while statesmanship the art of the second best?

The excellent treatment which Goebbels gave to his guest, Wodehouse, was such that he could, if he wanted, most certainly afford to write a novel. *Money in the Bank* may not be it; but, if it is not, he would write a serious novel afterwards. For all we know he has written it already. Has he not written a really serious short story in the collection entitled, *The Man with Two Left Feet*?

We read in the newspapers the other day that on a representation from friends (for whom he did not care?) through the International Red Cross, Wodehouse decided to stop his broadcasts from Germany. Even those who do not credit the serious novel theory will admit that Wodehouse was serious here.

Whether we think of how he fell into the hands of the Germans, or of how he planned to write serious stuff, we are struck by that saying which P. G. is never tired of repeating: There is a divinity that shapes our ends. Consider the case of Pelham Granville Wodehouse.

Change

BY K. CHANDRASEKHARAN, M.A., B.L., Madras

Woman is often described as fickle-minded in contrast to strong-natured man. This may be correct, but when compared with man's whims and fancies, woman's moods seem less unstable and inconstant. Why, as a matter of fact, there need be no special reproach against the mature adults either, for both are easily excelling the child in their craze for something new. It may be a most serious matter affecting life or it may be just a trifle of an enjoyment, both man and woman vie with one another for change in it. Whether it be in the matter of government, journalism, music, cinema, or, for that matter, anything essential or non-essential, change is the order of the day. If only some new machine can be invented for indicating accurately the frequent oscillations in public taste we may get bewildered by the lines and cross-lines on the recording sheet.

Now, in contrast to the ape, it is man who shows fidgetiness and want of mental discipline. Every day finds him seeking change and sensation. He demands every time a new story, a new leader in the daily, a new picture, a fresh song, a new set of ministers to govern him. Either he must read the same story in a different language with just a few alterations of names and incidents or he must be provided a new theme in the same phrases or diction. Again, morning or evening, he notices to his satisfaction huge street posters displaying new 'stars' in their attractive make-up. Only in that picture, so-and-so appeared in the main cast; in this she is acting a man's role, evoking no little amount of curiosity in him to witness that change. Only the other day, a particular song looked stereotyped; but today, when different words are set to the same tune, people go mad after it. Three months ago, a kind of slogan resounded in every street corner and on every platform; this month the very same politicians are crying hoarse for a change of policy. Indeed, an ape will be much steadier in its perch on the topmost bough or even perform the same number of swirls with its swinging body. By long habit, its antics may have gained a regularity even.

It is the modernist that is the worse culprit in comparison with his ancient prototype. He needs always a new plot in the story he reads. The ancients accepted a book like the *Ramayana* or the *Iliad* as the best-told story. For, in contrast to the present day novels and realistic sagas, our *puranas* never contain the utterly lewd or the

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astoundingly cheap details of everyday life, but give us enduring characters and elevating sentiments. You may complain of the episodes in the *Ramayana* as too old and ordinary, with the same beginning where Valmiki asks the simple question of Narada as to who is the perfect man on earth. You are prepared for the same old answer from Narada that Rama, the ideal hero, satisfies all the requisites. You are told of the same old king's agony to keep his plighted word and the hero's rescue of his father from untruth at the cost of a mighty kingdom. Well, you really wonder how these old-world men never felt dissatisfied with repeating the same verses a hundred times and how crowds of listeners congregated to hear them.

There are things which must not change but retain their forms—*mantras*, for instance; their potency lies in the fact that one returns to the same old mood of prayerfulness by repeating them. A *kirtana* or a well-constructed song should not be sung as your fancy leads you; rather, the musician needs must develop the song in the same invariable order of melody or *sangatis*. If he wants to sing it differently, he would be deemed a bad performer. Certainly, if art is our only aim, we should make up our minds to conform to certain immutable laws and unchanging elements; if we fail to abide by long tested canons of taste and blurt out things for the sake of smartness, we shall begin saying them badly.

Classical art and literature have never departed from their ancient moorings. You cannot find in them things of the hour but only ideals and standards for all times. There is an unvarying element in them which marks their permanence of value. That is the reason why we also cherish an unchanging admiration for them. On the other hand, when we take up to read a modern book, we finish it in a manner as we do a morning daily, throwing it away after perusal. Perhaps a re-reading of modern authors would enable us sometimes to rediscover our old attraction for the unchanging element. Perhaps, too, we leave it to posterity to find out for themselves the same old truth.

A Clash of Cultures

BY RAMDAS G. GOLIKERI, Bombay.

War is the defeat of civilization. So it is said. Aggression is a war against civilization. That is its natural corollary. It is the outcome of a movement that is in conscious revolt against what we mean by civilization. But our interpretation of it may not be the only one possible. It may be that a better type than ours claims to hold the field. That at least is what a hardened Fascist would assert, who would not hesitate to glorify his stand as the next step in human evolution, built up on the ruins of the old edifice, out-worn and dilapidated beyond repair. We are confronted, then, with a conflict of cultures indeed!

The word 'civilization' has something of an elusiveness about it. It will not, however, be out of place to hold every civilization to be, in its essence, a distinct phase of the human spirit. What gives it a shape and character, what makes it a part of universal history is the complex of ideas and value-judgments which it expresses. That this way of looking at the matter is justified is supported by the fact that every great civilization has been connected with a religion which certainly did voice to a considerable extent man's nature and his good.

If, then, we are convinced that what is at the source of a world-conflagration is, among many others, the conflict between two opposed civilizations or between civilization and barbarism, the natural query follows—what different complexes of values are implicit in them, what kind of life do they regard as good and, above all, what contrasting answers are given to the question, 'What is man?'

There is a phrase in Plato which describes, strangely enough, the exact predicament we find ourselves in today—"habit without an' intellectual principle." Into this vacuum have flowed phantasms, strange and fanatical—'Blood and Soil,' 'National Destiny,' 'Christianity a Slave Morality,' 'Action for action's sake.' Emotionalism, and still worse, blind faith have replaced knowledge and intellect. And, to crown all, comes the maxim, "Believe, obey, fight"—verily, the most degrading rule of life ever offered to a people.

Bad philosophies take hold for lack of better. So, when dictators are said to be a 'vacuum phenomenon,' the vacuum is understood to be created out of the inability of the philosophy and religion offered to us in

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our institutions to meet the spiritual needs of the modern world. The facts around us point to the conclusion that with the leaders they are outcast and with the masses a misfit. So far as philosophy is concerned, the fault is ascribed by some to the influence allowed for more than a century to the teachings of the Idealist School. Berkeley, Kant, Hegel and their folk have been allowed to lead human thought, and they have led it into a blind alley. Concepts like 'The Absolute,' 'The Categorical Imperative,' 'Ultimate Values' are a dead-end. Critically analysed, they are alleged to bear no genuine significance, having severed their relation with the universe we find ourselves in today, only to bar the 'advancement of thought.'

When we seek to characterise the system or movement which is opposed to us, we are met by considerable and outstanding implications. Perhaps the most formidable is that, *prima facie*, it appears singularly kinetic. Another complication arises out of the distorted usage of 'myth' by the exponents of totalitarian philosophy. There is no gainsaying the fact that the myth did come in handy even for Plato; but it was handled as a vehicle for conveying truth which could be expressed only in a symbolical form, the presupposition being that there is a truth of which the myth is a shadow. But the former do not entertain the idea of an absolute truth or reality; and so their use of the myth may be brushed aside as more or less a euphemism for a useful lie. One who can use myth and still be honest must needs be a believer in an absolute truth.

The fundamental element in the totalitarian conception of man is precisely that of one who has renounced all absolutes. We must not, however, be misguided by the fact that a tyrant too, on occasions, appeals to God. The God to whom he appeals, in so far as He is not a mere figure of rhetoric, is not the Christian God, but a mythical representation of the people or the spirit of the soil. Those who are fired by enthusiasm for the gospel are men who have lost faith, stage by stage, in the old absolutes—truth and goodness—and are as 'sheep without a shepherd.' A normal being cannot live without an absolute. If he cannot believe in a true absolute he will hang on to a partial and fictitious one. One who conceives oneself to be in relation with a true absolute cannot be wholly dominated by or absorbed in a singularly temporal environment. Adopting an absolute good, he is bound to recognise that the claims of the society upon him have definite limits. He has a life beyond it.

The justice of men may conflict, and, on occasions, even be at logger-heads with the justice which moral law enjoins upon him; and the

truth which he seeks and sees may contradict 'public opinion.' When once the hold upon the absolute has finally relaxed and the conclusion reached, not only with the intellect but with the imagination, that all is relative, that means, men have allowed themselves to be slaves. For an average man of the world cannot humanly tolerate a permanent state of absolute relativity—if the phrase be allowed. The vast majority of us feed ourselves on some relative absolute, if that is all we can get.

Now, those who claim that they are fighting to defend civilization are, if at all, defending civilization as they understand it and as they have inherited it. If we ask what concept of man is implicit in this civilization, the answer is not so simple; for one of the outstanding draw-backs of our system is that incoherence which furnishes our opponents with their most formidable weapons; and this incoherence is reflected in, or, to put it the other way round, is caused by, the diverse concepts of man and his good prevailing amongst us.

There are those who evaluate man in biological terms as the most cunning of animals; there are still others who accept him as the economic man of the law of supply and demand. It is not from them that the characteristic elements of our culture are derived. The basic difference is to be sought in the elevation or otherwise, as the case may be, of the personality of the individual in the community. All the values that have actual existence in life exist in and for persons. Thus the conviction is deeply rooted in the minds of democratic people that the person, every person as such, has a being not wholly exhausted by his social relations. This faith has survived the philosophical assaults on the idea of individual rights.

No one could be so dogmatic as to assert, and so credulous as to believe, that the civilization which a democratic people represent has been built up, without qualifications, on the principle of the value of personality. There are only too many grounds for the accusation that they have been false to the ideal they knew. It is far from truth that our society has always treated individuals, in Kant's phrase, as 'ends in themselves.' But admitting all this, it may still safely be held that this conception of the person as a value is the motive force of whatever progress we make and the source of any spiritual significance which our civilization possesses. And it will not be a hazardous generalisation to say that this conception is a corollary of the Christian faith. Only on the basis of some such idea of the nature of man, an idea that passes beyond the empirical to the metaphysical,

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can personal freedom be either logically defended or, in the long run, actually preserved; for, only on such a basis as this can the individual say to the State or the community, "I am not smaller than thou."

It is not, however, suggested here that this religion or that alone, or, for that matter, any religion as such in its accepted form is a hot-bed for personal liberty. The individual should know himself to be in contact with some absolute—that is its *sine qua non*. This is upheld, though in a variety of patterns, by every philosophy that is in the Platonic tradition. The prejudice is common that the acknowledgment of an absolute truth or absolute good is *a priori*, pure and simple, and hence inimical to intellectual freedom. But it is the one who believes in the absolute truth who will be prepared to admit that more of it may have been revealed to some persons whom the community regards as rebels or innovators. And a believer in an absolute good can easily allow that there may be prophets who have seen more of it than he, while one who clings to an arbitrary and spurious absolute of the 'Blood and Soil' brand must suppress the prophets at any cost.

That the totalitarian culture has the seeds of slow death in it needs no elaborate elucidation. It is bound to impose on the mind dogmatic fetters tighter than any ecclesiast ever dreamt of. There needs must supervene a slowing down of the activity of the intellect in the creative sphere of art and literature—not to speak of the scandalisation of science. For the poets must ever sing the same tune and the philosophers expound the same theory.

The chief reason, however, for confidence that culture cannot afford to stand and to point the way for progress is that it implies a concept of the nature of man that is not true exclusively. There is common agreement on the point that there is no more fundamental problem than the nature of man and his good and that on our answer to it depends the kind of civilization we try to create. Man cannot be absorbed without remainder into a community or State even though it be invested with religious awe; for, as has already been observed, he is a creature who cannot live without absolutes. And he cannot be hoodwinked at all times by means of counterfeit substitutes.

Equality in Honour and Disgrace

BY RAJANIKANT MODY, BOMBAY

Mānāpamānayostulya—GITA.

Why should we be equal in honour as well as in disgrace? What could honour and disgrace mean? How do they affect our life and soul? These and such other questions naturally arise in the reasoning mind on looking at the sentence from the *Gita*. And the reasoning mind will arrive at a rather vague conclusion that equality, *samata*, is the essential thing we should have in order to liberate our spirit out of the trammels of the external Nature, and equality in honour and disgrace is only one particular application of the general equality and is nothing more. This conclusion is in its essence correct and logical and is to a certain extent justified by spiritual experience. For we know that equality of soul in everything and every event, does eventually lead to a peace of mind and a cessation of all our attractions and repulsions. Such an equality is a necessity for the outflowering of peace and calm.

But this is not all. This sentence contains in itself much more meaning than what appears on the surface. If we look deeper into the nature of honour and disgrace we shall find that they arise out of the dealings of one individual with mankind in general, and in particular with the society, class and family to which that individual belongs. It is quite apparent that Robinson Crusoe living solitary on a far, far island could have nothing to do with honour and disgrace. It is only when one individual comes into contact with others that such a consideration arises. Now the ordinary social, domestic man is governed in all his actions towards himself as well as others by the three-fold mental, vital, physical ego and by desire. And this is the natural state of affairs for the mentalised physical and vital being that man is. This action, arising out of ego and desire, would have become the most dominant factor in an individual's life, had he not been controlled by an evolving moral sense which would have him pay due regard to the claims and conveniences, as well as the rights, of other individuals. It is this evolving moral sense that is at the root of the conception of honour and disgrace. In order better and more easily to satisfy the pressing demands of his ego and desires, and in order to bring about a working compromise between these things, on the one hand, and the growing sense of morality in him, on the other, he has got to be considerate regarding the claims of others. He has to tame down and

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modify his own ego and desires, and, that too, for his own ultimate good. This utilitarian compromise between his ego and that of the others brings about a system of checks and balances for the smooth working of society, the breaking or disturbing of which by the individual would invite the anger of society and the proper maintaining of which would result in a general good feeling in the minds of others. As society grows and increases in having power over the individuals constituting it, these two things, society and its power, determine disgrace and honour. The growth of society brings about a certain kind of unwritten code of social rules governing the conduct and behaviour of the individuals, and these rules are generally termed customs. The social honour or disgrace is the sanction which enforces these customs or rules of conduct on the individual. The individual is tempted by society to obey its customs with the reward of social honour which it lays before him, and is threatened into obeying them with the punishment of disgrace and calumny.

Thus we can see that in their very inception, honour and disgrace are purely egoistic products. It may be that it is a higher kind of egoism, toned down, as it is, by the increasing moral and social sense; but still egoism it is; and egoism in any form whatever is inconsistent with any real spiritual progress. When once an individual gives up egoistic motives in his actions and rises higher and higher into the consciousness of pure impersonality, this sanction of honour and disgrace loses all its meaning for him, for that sanction is meant to subdue the vehemence of desire and egoism for the sake of creating a harmonious system among the conflicting rights and interests of the many individuals that constitute the society. Egoism thus subdued and suppressed might well allow the bringing about of a mentalised vital system, but that cannot be the final aim or goal of the whole process of evolution.

One who aspires to go beyond this intermediate poise of an ordered and harmonised egoistic compromise, can have nothing to do with this kind of social honour or disgrace. Being free from the egoistic urge of mind, vital and physical, he is not governed in his actions by any of the lower motives and the higher Powers take their place. Hence the actions of such a person are beyond the judgment of the vital mentality of society in general. It may be that his actions are quite in keeping with the ideas of society as a whole, if the Divine so wills, and then he will incur no disgrace or will deserve no honour from society. But it may also be that his actions are contrary to the generally accepted notions, and here too, if the Divine so wills, for he is free from all egoistic

motives which could interfere with His Will and has no desires or demands to make. In this case also, he need not fear the disgrace nor desire the honour of society. The centre of his actions being raised, he knows fully well that the action which is done by the Divine Will through himself as Its mute, willing instrument, cannot be affected favourably or otherwise by the honour or disgrace shown by society. And, hence, it is this raising of the centre of our activity from egoism to pure Impersonality, that should precede the equality to honour and disgrace. Before we can get rid of egoism and make our self-surrender to the Divine, this kind of social sanction is a good check on our egoism and desires. But after this transformation is effected, the society, being based on some sort of egoistic compromise, cannot judge the correctness or otherwise of a pure impersonal action and hence cannot rightly reward or punish the individual who has gone beyond all the existing social standards of action. Hence the honour or disgrace shown by society should not at all be taken into account by such an individual.

That is the meaning of *mānāpamānayostulya*.

Life

BY GOPAL BHAUMIK, M.A.

(Rendered by the author from his original Bengali poem.)

Our days are covered with dark shadows :
With great difficulty do we tread on the path of life—
But still there is hope in the secret recess of the heart,
We shall not be wholly defeated.

This life has become a stagnant pool :
But still the shark of memory plays in it ;
Though confirmed atheists at heart—
We secretly long for the boon of God.

Our desires have multi-coloured butterfly wings :
We see season flowers at the dead of night ;
But an arid desert lying by our side
Shows us the mistake and makes us ashamed.

We see marble palaces in the dreamland and rejoice :
But in this life the shade of the tree provides our only habitation ;
The hard reality triumphs at last—
But still there is the desire to live.

Manikyam

BY R. VENKATA SIVADU, M.A.,L.T., Rajahmundry.
(Rendered from his own original Telugu story.)

Let the world entertain the strangest opinions about me. I am indifferent alike to their praise and blame. They know not all about me. So they misjudge me!

Why does the aroma of the tender mango in the spring bring tears to my eye? Boys in the street exclaim: "What a shy youth this Manohar is! He is afraid of the sight of jasmine buds!" To elderly people my single state is an enigma. They look upon my austerities as a meaningless formality. They are welcome to their opinions. Gentle reader, let me take you into my confidence and acquaint you with an incident in my early youth which may enable you to form the right opinion about me.

I

In my young days I took a solemn vow not to entertain thoughts of marriage till I completed my studies and entered a profession. Somehow I passed my exam. and took up service. Then, accompanied by a friend, I started on the quest of a personal inspection of prospective brides. Days in that year's summer were particularly hot. As a result of these forced marches and irregular meals, our health was impaired. At last late one morning we plodded our weary way to a village. It was a mere hamlet. We felt dead tired. The villagers showed us a house to lodge in. It was as much as we could do to dismount from the cart and drag ourselves along into the house.

It was a thatched house, but seemed to have been designed by men who had ideas of comfort and convenience. There was nobody at home. The owner of the house had gone out on some professional business. There was no trace even of women. During our journey, my friend was invariably in charge of the commissariat. He now surveyed the house at close quarters and exclaimed: "My friend, today we are destined to fast!" He fretted and fumed and with a wry face squatted down on the mat I occupied.

By and by, a girl returned from the village tank with a water-pot on her shoulder. I would have addressed a few words to any elderly person accompanying her, but there was none such. Though it was but 10 o'clock in the morning, the sun shone with terrific heat as at mid-day. Both of us

were a prey to extreme hunger. My friend was hardly able to speak; I was equally helpless. Distress stands not on ceremonies. Casting aside diffidence, I said, "Madam, we are hunger-stricken travellers. Pity you are alone in the house! It is cruel to ask you to play the hostess to us. We shall cook for ourselves if you will kindly provide some rice and a vessel." So spoke I words of formal etiquette, but, as a matter of fact, we were unable even to move a little finger!

Overcoming her bashfulness, the girl replied, "Sir, why do you trouble yourself? Food is getting ready and father is expected in a minute. You may all dine together."

These words were nectar to our ears. The maiden who, unasked, was preparing our food appeared the goddess of Hospitality. Unable to speak words of thankfulness and concealing tears of joy, I slid down on to the mat. My friend and I were soon sunk in deep slumber.

* * * * *

"It is very late. Please bathe and get ready for food." These words emanating from a masculine throat fell on my ears two or three times before I woke up. "I have found fault with my daughter for not having served you food already. Get up please," so saying the master of the house led us into the dining hall.

I do not vividly remember the story of our first meal in that house. The words of the host at the dinner were but faintly heard by us. We ate our food, nodding in sleep. Though the stimulus of food in the stomach enabled us partly to overcome sleep, still immediately after breakfast, we applied ourselves again to bed. We woke not till evening twilight. We rose and looked round; the master of the house was engaged in some house-hold work, while his good daughter was busy with preparations for a night-meal.

By supper-time, our drowsiness cleared off. Till then, mine host had not asked of us any questions. Nor do we remember any such queries if ever they were put. He appeared to be a person of a benevolent disposition notwithstanding adverse family conditions. We felt distressed to hear that the recent calamity of his wife's demise made him an utter dependent on his tender-aged daughter. When he apologised that he had forgotten to ask us about our business, my friend Ramanatham gave him a brief account of our journey. Said he in conclusion, "Thus sir, we are quite spent up in these matrimonial trips of my friend, Manohar. Always there is some hitch. He frets that beauty does not go along with education

nor music with good looks. Goodness knows about his marriage but it goes ill if I do not reach home soon! Such was Ramanatham's determination.

Ramanatham was a well-meaning young man of a quiet disposition. He would not do things hastily, nor would he excuse precipitate action on the part of others. Before retiring to bed that night we had some little conversation between ourselves. "Manohar, this obstinacy of yours in matters matrimonial will not do. Even traversing whole continents at this rate will bring us no nearer the girl of your choice!" so spoke out my jaded friend.

The next morning, I was startled from my bed by his voice. My limbs were heavy. My eyes were burning. As soon as the sounds of the wheels of his cart were audible, he appeared near my bed. "Manohar, I come to bid adieu. You should not travel in this state of health. But it is not proper that we should both stay in a stranger's house. Permit me to go. Start as soon as you get better." To this I replied, "Yes, but what of our errand?" My friend, who was impatiently entering the cart just then, remarked, "It does not matter much. Make up your mind and your marriage will soon be an accomplished fact!" So saying, he left me.

The whole of that day, high fever troubled me. With the rising sun, rose the temperature of my body. My limbs ached with a racking pain. I felt sorry that my only companion had left me. My suffering grew in intensity as night wore on. Whenever I opened my eyes, the figure of the host soothing my limbs, and that of his daughter helping me to some drink were visible like hazy forms in dreamland!

II

Though that fever raged but a single day and night, I was utterly prostrated. In the first place, I lost all appetite for food. If I left bed and took but a couple of steps, my eyes reeled. In that predicament my sole refuge was the master of the house. His goodness beggars all description. He was not at all vexed that a stranger had intruded himself upon his hospitality and remained a guest for days together. On the other hand, he patiently administered medicine and spoke cheering words like a guardian angel. His only regret was that the services he rendered were not more!

But what about his daughter? She was an incarnation of the gentle side of his nature. It is rare to find such virtue in combination with such discretion at so tender an age. She would ungrudgingly accomplish her household tasks with the half-skill she had attained. Many were the tireless devices she employed in the preparation of dainties and

chutneys to stimulate my deadened palate and re-establish there a taste for food. It is due to the gentle services of that kind-hearted maiden that I soon rallied and picked up strength. Then it was that I realised the significance of the truth that the mother is latent in the girl. Manikyam was a real gem.

One afternoon, lying on my bed, I began a long review of my own circumstances. "How mysterious are the workings of Destiny! I started on a particular errand with a friend, but illness soon found me a guest in the house of strangers. Now this village has become my sweet home, and the inmates of this house my longstanding friends! What an irony that these fasts and feasts have utterly drowned all thought of matrimony in me!"

But when new blood began to course in my veins, old thoughts revolved in my mind with their wonted rapidity. I would ponder over Ramanatham's parting words: "If there is the least truth in them, God has yet to create a bride for me! Otherwise, I must wed a girl full of frailties and foibles—" Thus as thoughts of marriage revived in me, my mind fell a prey to an endless tangle of harassing thoughts leaving me exhausted! I would then exert myself to divert my attention from this painful theme.

* * * * *

As in those days my mind had no serious engagement, I spent my time in the contemplation of my surroundings. In this vast stage of the world, my eyes beheld but two actors: they are Manikyam and her father. The survey of the character of father and daughter constituted my chief theme and pastime. The amiable qualities of the parent shone with redoubled brilliance in the child, though the physical attractions of the latter were not half so much in evidence in the former. Her elegance was not of the kind which dazzles the eye instantaneously—young men are easily mistaken in the appreciation of this type of beauty. The full extent of her charms was perceptible only to those who beheld the twinkling eyes radiating the beauty of her intellect. Moreover, her beauty manifested itself in every spoken word. Her sweet voice was but an echo of her pure and generous heart. Her honeyed words were calculated to charm away all ills of body and mind! Her little snatches of work amidst song and play were more neat and elegant than the elaborately performed tasks of elderly ladies. Should there be any defects in the former the very defects lent new charm to them!

I would curiously observe the little sports and pastimes of this village girl. Though obliged to do all domestic work single-handed, she

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would not always get stuck up in it, but would snatch intervals of rest. The afternoon hours were her holiday time. Then would she go visiting and receive visits from girl-friends in the neighbourhood. The ornaments of these girls in the sport were the jasmine buds in the garden and the red lilies of the tank! These constituted Manikyam's jewels even afterwards, adding a fresh charm to her beauty.

My observation of Manikyam's movements reminded me afresh of the topic of marriage which it had been my endeavour to forget. But this time I realised fully the truth of Ramanatham's words. The doubts which had harassed me hitherto now vanished. "If I prefer the married state, there is only one girl in the wide world whom I must needs choose. If I secure her, I secure life's happiness. If otherwise, I must bid adieu to married life." This was my firm resolution!

Need the reader be told who that girl is?

III

The sequel is easily told. I hinted my resolve to Manikyam's father. Though at first overcome with astonishment, he considered deeply and gave his consent. Manikyam, who apparently caught the hint from her father, made herself scarce thenceforward. In a day or two, I returned home.

I was soon immersed in the daily round of professional duties at the town. Thus weeks and months flitted away. I had no opportunity to think often of Manikyam, or to enquire after the welfare of father and daughter. One day I received a letter which ran thus :

Kalavalur

Dear Manohar,

You must have been in receipt of my last letter. So you too have turned hostile like Fate! Or else, you would have been here already. Briefly, Manikyam is in her last moments. She, however, seems reluctant to take her departure from this world without having a last look at you. I beg of you to come over here speedily. This is my sole wish.

... Venkateswar."

Though I read this letter twice over, I could not make out its meaning. I protested the letter was not mine, but the messenger was emphatic that it was for me. I wondered what in the world was the relationship between me and these blessed folk of Kalavalur! But one or two hints dropped by him instantaneously revived forgotten memories. This letter, then, was about my own dear Manikyam! The writer was her own father. The missing of the previous letter must have been the work of the inmates of my house. How stupid their action is! Else, I would have seen my Manikyam long ago. Fearing further delay, I got into a swift conveyance and soon reached the destination. The red lily, the pride of

the village tank, appeared withered on its stalk. No smiles of the people in the street greeted me!

With lightning speed I entered the house. Not heeding the words of the people who said that it was all too late, I was soon at the bed-stead of the patient. Her father, who was administering to her the last drops of water with basil leaves, noticed my advent with a moistened eye. Manikyam, in whom life was flickering, opened her eyes wide and stared at me. Though the body was all but consumed by poisonous fever, the eyes shone bright in all their natural lustre—tears were now flowing down copiously from those eyes, like dew-drops from the petals of the morning blue lily. With her right hand which she had lifted with effort she beckoned to me. I went nearer and touched the hand which was fast getting cold. Slowly she lifted up the palm of my hand to her lips and imprinted thereon a faint kiss. Her head fell back. "Dear Manikyam, I have come. Do not fear." So strove I to put in a word of comfort. As if to acknowledge this, the patient attempted a nod but her eyes dilated in a wild gaze. Life was extinct from those orbs.

* * * * *

Little else remains for me to tell. My darling Manikyam is gone! Marriage has now no interest for me. My relations with womankind are at an end. All those objects of nature which resemble her beautiful limbs and which remind me of her, give me excruciating pain. The sight of the blue lily brings tears into eyes. The jasmine buds which graced the braid of her tresses are poison to me. The sweet odours of the tender mango with which she restored my appetite blast my heart!

Though it is a long time since she took her departure I still feel the heat of the funeral pyre which consumed her body! Sometimes, the world appears like hell to me. At such times, I feel tempted to think of giving up my profession and take to a wandering life. But realising soon that the quintessence of life consists in the control of sorrow, I divert my thoughts and seek to subdue the mind by the reins of duty. But no effort of mine is able to wean my heart from the memory of Manikyam. My friends have tried to laugh it away as mere sentiment, and teach me asceticism, but to me Manikyam is a living Reality. Relations have prescribed marriage as an antidote to my obsession. But the maiden who inspired pure love in me, but who was mightily disappointed in the realisation of conjugal happiness with me here below since her own life was cut short by cruel Fate,—I cannot bring myself to break off my sacred relations with my beloved one and take to another.

The Hindus and the Skies

By C. R. PATTABHI RAMAN, B.A., B.L., Madras

It has been rightly observed that one has only to look at the skies on a starry night to believe in God. Indians led the way and excelled in the study of Astronomy, the first of all sciences, centuries before others. Curiously enough, very rarely are the Indian systems referred to or the Indian legends concerning many stellar constellations mentioned by writers in astronomical treatises.

The publication of the Krishnapuram, Narasapur and Tiruvellore tables opened the eyes of the western world to the marvels of the Indian calculations and *ephemeris*. It becomes clear, when the ancient astronomical systems are compared with one another, that the ancient Indians, Egyptians, Chinese, Greeks, Persians, Romans, Goths and many others spoke at one time the same language and shared the same faith. The late Mr. Tilak's article in Vol. IX of the *Prabudha Bharata* on the "Arctic home of the Aryans" deals in detail with these ancient origins. Throughout Asia and Europe we see the days of the week presided over by the Sun, Moon and the Planets, with one or two exceptions here and there owing to local influences.

Hindu astronomers many centuries ago were able to fix accurately the positions and movements of the heavenly bodies and to prepare time tables for them. Their mathematical calculations were amazingly advanced and correct and they understood and provided for "precessions." They fixed the age of the Earth at a figure which is only now being understood and appreciated by modern scientists. The commencement of the Kali Yuga, according to some, was fixed at 3102 B.C. sometime in the middle of February, when the Sun, Moon and the other Planets were more or less in conjunction. Similar conjunctions marked other eras.

The twelve zodiacal constellations which housed the Sun in turn during each month of the year are more or less common to the Aryan tribes but the Hindus, improving upon this, have, in addition, another division of the ecliptic into 27 parts. Each of these divisions was called a Nakshatra and in each Nakshatra the Moon stayed for a period slightly longer than a day. The brightest star in the Nakshatra was called the Yoga Tara.

The Hindus were concerned more with the accurate study of the motions of the Sun, Moon and the Planets than with a mere cataloguing of the stars in the sky, with the result that only a few conspicuous stars and their places outside the Nakshatras have been mentioned by them. I shall now refer to a few of the stars and constellations catalogued by modern astronomers which have been taken note of by Hindus, and in some cases to the Hindu legends concerning them.

Among the Nakshatras, Krittika, called the Pleiades in the constellation Taurus (Vrishabham), are the goddesses that played their part at the birth of Lord Subrahmanya. Rohini (Alpha Tauri Aldebaran), the first magnitude star in Taurus, has *inter alia* the honour of calling itself Lord Krishna's birth-star. Mrigasira is the head of Orionis and Ardra, famed in connection with Lord Nataraja, is Betelgeuse (Alpha Orionis), the bright red star and one of the largest known stars in the heavens. Punarvasu, famed in connection with Sree Rama's birth, is Pollux (Beta Geminorum) in the third constellation of the Twins (Mithunaṁ) in the zodiac. Magha is Regulus (Alpha Leonis) in the constellation Leo (Simham) and was considered by the Persians to be one of the four royal stars guarding the heavens, the others being Aldebaran, Antares and Fomalhaut. Chitra is Spica (Alpha Virginis) in Virgo (Kanya) and Swati is Arcturus (Alpha Bootis), one of the most brilliant stars in the northern hemisphere near the Saptarishis (Great Bear). Jyeshta in Scorpio (Vrischikam) is Antares (Alpha Scorpii) and Sravana is Altair (Alpha Aquilae) in Makara (Capricornus).

Outside the Nakshatras we have, first of all, in the northern sky the Saptarishis (Great Bear). Near Vasishtha in this constellation is seated tiny Arundhati, his wife. Dhruva (Stella Polaris) or the Pole Star, which is in a line with the first two stars in the Great Bear, and Arundhati in the Saptarishis are pointed out to the newly-wedded couple on their marriage day in order that they may emulate the constancy of the one and the chastity of the other. The expression Arundhati Nyaya means the method by which a beginner is made to comprehend things gradually. The priest in Hindu marriages takes the married couple out into the open and asks them first to face north, then points out to them a particular branch of some tree or asks them to note the constellation to the right or left of the branch and, after helping them to locate the group of stars, point out Arundhati. No better instance of this method can be cited than the way in which Lord Krishna takes Arjuna on hand and makes him understand the eternal

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verities in the *Gita*. The next star of importance is Lubdhaka, the Hunter, or Sirius (Alpha Canis major), also called the Dog Star, the brightest in the skies. Agastya or Canopus (Alpha Argus) is the second brightest star in the sky south of Sirius. Agastya, the great seer, steers the ship Argha (Argo) for the Sun. Agni (Beta Tauri) in Vrishabham stands suitably enough for the hottest days of the year for the people living north of the equator. Prajapati is Delta Aurigae in the constellation Auriga, and Brahmahridaya, Capella in the same constellation. Trisankhu, whose downward fall from the heavens was arrested by Vishwamitra, is dangling head downwards in the southern horizon and a part of this constellation is called the Crux or the Southern Cross.

The Empty House

BY K. K. KAUL

All night waiting in an empty house
Under the roof that rusted, by the
mud-chinked walls, a yawning fire-place,
a man of nervous temperament waiting
the broken pauper rehearsing
to be or not to be.

He said

—There was a prostitute under the lamp,
the baby beggar in the gutter, but
we are poor creatures,
All of us . . .

The sweater's victim
"Sewing at once, with a double thread,
a shroud as well as a shirt,"
dreadful ghastly facts.

A little child, staggering with exhaustion
numb with agony, knowing
no hope but the grave.

But I have seen the mother
weary and weeping, smitten with the
mortal hunger of her babes;
making her choice between the brothel
and the lake. . . .

Premchand—A Study

(With special reference to his last novel "GODAN")

By MADAN GOPAL, Lahore

Premchand, the veteran Hindustani writer, raised his voice and cautioned us, as early as 1904 against the tide of Western civilisation which, foolishly imitated by the intelligentsia of the land, was tending to the deterioration of moral standards in Indian social life, and leading to a lamentable hybridisation of culture. The position of woman in the family and in society early attracted his attention and forms the central theme of all his novels that appeared before 1920 and *Ghaban* and *Nirmala* later. As an important secondary thread, it exists in almost all the others. His attitude, as reflected in his books and which was in line with the ancient Indian ideal of self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-control—ideals which placed woman on a higher pedestal than man—remained consistent throughout his life; there was no appreciable modification. That way Premchand was a conservative writer. But in his last novel, *Godan*, his views on the various aspects of this problem were crystallised and are brought out with great artistry.

Miss Malati, an England-returned doctor, is a social butterfly. She is vociferous and demands equality with man in regard to votes and the right of courtship. Chance brings her into contact with the philosopher Professor Mehta, who may be said to be the mouthpiece of Premchand, and to express the author's views. She falls in love with him and ultimately forgets all about her ideals. But Mehta does not love her; his outlook on life is different; he envies Mr. Khanna, an industrialist and banker who sucks the blood of the poor labourers, another prototype of John Sewak in *Rangabumi*, because of Mrs. Govindi Khanna, who is ten times more sensible and practical and honest than her greedy husband. She is the ideal woman of Premchand's conception and has few faults, although for these qualities she has once to leave her house, the real cause being Malati whom Khanna loves, in spite of the fact that she merely flirts with him.

But Malati, or Mehta, or Khanna, or Rai Sahib form only the second important theme of the novel: they all belong to the middle classes, which formed the central theme of Premchand's pre-1920 novels, that is, till the time Gandhiji came on to the Indian stage and Premchand resigned his job to participate in the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921. From now onwards the central theme of all his novels was, primarily, the peasant. *Premasram*, *Rangabumi*, *Kayakalp*, *Karmabhumi* and *Godan* are all

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agrarian novels, wherein everything else revolves round the life of the peasant. In *Premasram* or in *Gosha-i-Afia* (Urdu), it is his struggle against the Taluqdar or the hereditary landlord; in *Rangabhumi* or in *Chaugan-i-Hasti* (Urdu), the struggle is against the pseudo-nationalist industrialists; in *Karmabhumi* or in *Maidan-i-Amal* (Urdu), it also envelops the Harijans and the labour class in the fight for the vindication of their rights. The shame-faced and ruthless exploitation of the peasant by the moneylender is the theme of *Godan*.

The last of his agrarian epics, *Godan*, is also the last of Premchand's novels, published in the year of his death, 1936. And it is his best. For its characters are more chiselled, polished and realistic, the plot more coherent, although herein, as in most of his novels, the two main themes run parallel to each other and touch only at a few points and that too only at the surface. The ideas are more systematically arranged and the dull monotony of long speeches and harangues is broken by the periodic criticisms and interruptions by Pandit Onkar Nath, the editor of the *Bijli*, and in the speech of Mr. Mehta on women's demand for equality with man. Premchand's art is seen here at its best. Unlike far too many of his novels, wherein the characters die unnatural deaths, by epidemics, suicide, murder or drowning and far too many improbable happenings and coincidences take place, in *Godan*, these defects cannot be pointed out.

Besides, the language herein used is unparalleled in homeliness, vivacious simplicity, spontaneity and suggestion. There is the excellence of style and narration. The novel is quick with the rhythm of life. Those passages wherein the author expresses his own philosophical or metaphysical reflections are superb, because, although they are polished and finished to a great degree, the language used is very simple. Rural and homely words come to him without the least effort.

In all his novels that preceded it, idealism almost always swayed him. Herein realism and its twin-brother, pessimism, are predominant. In all his novels before *Godan*, he created idealist heroes, Premshankar in *Premasram*, Sur Das in *Rangabhumi*, Chakradhar in *Kayakalp* and Amarkant in *Karmabhumi*, all of whom bear the indelible imprint of Gandhi and Tolstoy. Valiant fighters against tyranny, inspired by the highest and noblest ideals of love and service of the down-trodden masses whom they organise for mass-scale satyagraha, they always pursue, undeterred by the sacrifices they are called upon to make, the path of Truth.

Perhaps the only idealist character in *Godan* is Prof. Mehta, who is sagacious, but verges on eccentricity, and he figures only in a minor theme in the story. Save one very isolated strike in Mr. Khanna's mill, there are no strikes, let alone mass movements. One wonders if Premchand, in his last days, lost faith in the efficacy of non-violent struggle. And if he did not lose his faith, he at least came to entertain some doubts about the same.

Unlike all other agrarian novels, *Godan* does not end in a compromise, in the triumph of the peasant. As a matter of fact, herein Premchand refrains from suggesting any solution to any problem, an idea so dear to his heart. He had absolutely no faith in votes for the peasant, in Councils, in elections and in popular ministries (they had not come into existence then, and Premchand had before him only the 1919 experiment.) They could not ameliorate the lot of the peasant. He makes Tanakha say that democracy is the rule by the big bankers and traders. The futility of rural reconstructions, a fad started in those days, is reflected in what Malati, after her conversion and dedication to a life of service, achieves. She analyses the problem of rural indebtedness as being due to fragmentation of land and the extravagance of the peasant on social functions. But she suggests no real solution. She merely employs Gobar as a *mali* and gives him a rather privileged position in her family ; it is more or less by way of charity.

When we first meet Gobar, we find him a rebellious soul. We hope that, like all other characters of Premchand, which are dynamic and never static, changing with the changing environments and always developing the traits latent in them, Gobar would grow into, perhaps, a Socialist leader and would organise people for a struggle against the moneylenders and the system which grinds down the peasant into a paste. Our hopes are, however, belied. Gobar becomes a part of the system which victimises the peasants and against which Gobar was to raise his voice. Instead, he now hates the village and prefers to be a poor servile labourer in the town where, in the first instance, he carves out a place for himself. He earns some money and lends it to others at exorbitant rates, which, if the moneylender charged from Hori, perturbed Gobar. In a way, he becomes a cog in the machine which is responsible for Hori's ruination and ends in his death. But could Gobar help it ? Perhaps not, for, as Premchand says, in the society as it is constituted to-day, either one is an exploiter or is exploited. There can be no third alternative. The only solution of the problem, Premchand said, was a thorough shake-up of the

present system. And till that comes the peasant's fate would be the fate of Hori.

Hori's is the most realistic characterisation in Premchand's works. It is indigenous to the Indian soil. Hori is not merely an individual; he is the representative of a class, whose virtues and failings he shares. If you know Hori intimately, as you actually do from *Godan*, you know almost everything important about the peasant in India, for the U.P. peasant is not much different from, say, the peasant from South India, as also about the class or stratum he comes from. Indeed, Hori is the class.

It is significant that *Godan* is a romance in ugly names. Hori, Gobar, Jheengur, Dhaniya, Paniya, Jhuniya, Nokhe Ram, Magru Shah and Chuhiya—all bring to our mind their proximity with the soil.

To Hori, ideas count for little. For him feelings and instinct are the only real things. Realism is the backbone of his life. He does not believe in Gobar's reasoning, which may all be very sound, but cannot be put into practice, because Hori's ancestors did not act that way.

Gobar resents Hori's kowtowing before the Rai Sahib, when he enjoys no concession and pays almost the same taxes as others do. But Hori knows that his mere visits to the Rai Sahib raise him in the estimation of his fellow-peasants. Indeed, without any teachings of Dale Carnegie, he is the master of the engineering of the human mind. He is clever that way; he sympathises with Bhola, in the latter's difficulties in re-marrying, and promises to help him—all this because he has an eye on one of Bhola's cows, an objective wherein he ultimately succeeds. By speaking highly of middle-aged Dhaniya, he tickles her vanity, so that she may give hay free of charge to Bhola without any fuss. All this is instinctive.

Gobar says that God has made every one of us equal. Hori differs. He believes that all those who are born poor would not have earned good by their actions in their previous life, while those who were born rich must have.

The Past is Hori's only argument; it is his only sheet-anchor. He is a slave to custom. He believes in things, he acts, he behaves exactly in the same way as did his forefathers, and does so because they did so. He does not have anything, not even a rupee, to offer at the altar of the idol at the annual "Katha" and feels remorseful, not because he is poor but because he could not offer anything, his mite at the altar of God, whom he truly fears.

The brahmin is another agency which the peasant can never defy. Pandit Data Din is a moneylender with all the privileges that a high-caste birth has given him, for as Hori says: "The last pie that is the brahmin's due shall break through our very bones."

Hori knows, and Dhaniya has an argument with him, that the Council of Five may be wrong. Nevertheless, its orders must be obeyed: "In the Council of Five resides God." And he obeys its orders because its orders had always had the seal of sanctity which was respected by his forefathers. And if he disobeyed, the family's *izzat* was at stake. So when the Council actually fines him Rs. 100, almost his entire produce of the season, for giving shelter to Jhuniya, a widow whose hand had been accepted by Gobar *in camera*, and who had no other place to go to with her five-month old burden, knowing that he is already under heavy debt, he borrows money to pay the fine. Besides, his children are starving. And he also knows that those who have fined him are fornicators themselves. Still, Hori cannot, must not, defy the Council. It had the seal of sanctity and custom.

Hori shares the vices of his class, too. He beats his wife, whenever he feels like it. Nevertheless, he is faithful to her, although he would not lose an opportunity to cut a few vulgar jokes with Dulari Sahuyain, a woman-moneylender, whom he jestingly addresses as "Bhabi" or sister-in-law.

Hard-pressed by circumstances, he "sells" away his daughter, Rupa, to an aged widower. His house is already mortgaged; Data Din demands his money back, while Hori has none. His land, which is more than the peasant's life, is in danger of being taken away. Although Gobar says there is nothing basically wrong so long as the money taken from the son-in-law is returned, Hori feels remorseful and this event hastens his end.

The policeman to Hori is death incarnate. His very sight freezes Hori's blood. But he is not a coward. When he sees that his landlord's life is in danger and is sure of the latter's implicit approval, he simply jumps at the "Pathan," jeopardising his own life.

The supreme ambition of Hori is a cow. And he does bring one, although it proves to be his undoing. When the entire village comes to see it and admires it and only Hira does not come to see the cow, Hori is pained. He is even restless and sends an emissary for him to come and have a look at it little knowing that Hira is jealous and harbours sinister designs on the animal. He poisons the cow and, because of the crime, leaves

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home. By doing this, however, he has sealed the fate of Hori, for the death of the cow is only the signal for calamities after calamities. Hori has seen Hira approaching the cow in the dark with his own eyes. He does not report to the police, and when the police does come he swears by his son that he has not seen Hira near the cow. To his already heavy debts he adds more by borrowing more money to bribe the police, so that they may not search the house of Hira, because Hira's *izzat* is his own *izzat*. During Hira's absence, Hori first tills and cultivates Hira's fields and then his own, for he asks who else would help Paniya if he did not. As a result whereas there is plenty in Paniya's house, Hori's own children starve.

Hira is the real cause of all Hori's difficulties. When, however, he comes back, a day before Hori's death, there is absolutely no difference in Hori's love for Hira. Hori does not see in him the source of all his troubles, but only as a child as when left by their parents. The intervening 30 years melt away. He says: "Why weep. To err is human. Where have you been all the time?"

But all these good and noble qualities are of no avail. In spite of them, indeed because of them, Hori is subjected to a system which provides him with scarcely enough for a bare living. He works harder and ever harder. At the opening of the book, we find his tender-aged children working at midday in the hottest month of the year. He ~~lives~~ under conditions of forced and convict labour. Life for him is no feast; it is not work even. It is a dull heavy tiresome burden. It is a battle which he never wins. And yet he works, because he must work, because the peasant has always worked. He is a true "Karma Yogi."

On the one hand, he is buffeted by the inclement forces of Nature. On the other, there is the system which reduces him to a blind mechanical force, gradually exhausting itself out. He sweats and toils, so that the fruit of his sweat and toil may be enjoyed by others. He fights others' battles, others who would stop at nothing short of devouring him. There is not one agency, but there are many which grind him down. The bureaucracy, the aristocracy and the guardians of religion all conspire "to eat him up," his exploitation being their common bond.

First, there is the landlord, Rai Sahib. He is a friend. He has retained all the faults of the East and has grafted on those of the West. During the Congress movement of Civil Disobedience, he courted imprisonment. He puts on khaddar and claims to be a nationalist. He has literary gifts too and writes occasional skits. At heart, he says, he is a Socialist,

believing in the nobility of manual labour and recognising the inherent injustice of the present system. But that is theory; in practice he is not a whit different from other brutish landlords. When the labourers refuse to give "begar," he is wild with rage. When the mercenary editor of the *Bijli* voices the grievances of the peasants, he shuts the editor's mouth with subscription for a hundred copies. He raises 500 rupees from the poor peasants to be spent on drinks, though the party is in connection with "Dhanush Yagya." Again, when Hori is fined by the Council of Five he feels that injustice has been done to Hori. He asks the Council to disgorge the money but . . . the money goes not to Hori but to the exchequer of Rai Sahib!

There are also the petty officials and the pseudo-nationalist industrialists who suck the peasant's blood. But, in cruelty, the moneylender is supreme. He is shrewd and clever and would never see the peasant die, or give up work, or even the village, for if the peasant goes, the moneylender loses the hen that lays the golden egg. He just keeps him alive.

Hori says there are over half a dozen moneylenders to every one peasant. There is *patwari* Pateshwari Shah, there is Jhinguri Shah; there is Nokhe Ram; there is Magru Shah; there is Dulari Sahuyayin, with her mask of feminine kindness; and there is Data Din, with the sanction of religion behind him. There are so many of them, for, as Premchand says, moneylending is by far the easiest and the most profitable business.

The system works this way:

Hori took 30 rupees from Dulari. After three years it became 100 rupees. Then a promissory note was written. After another two years it became 150 rupees. From Magru Shah he borrowed 60 rupees; this has been twice paid over, and yet the loan stands at the same figure.

How cruel the system is is shown vividly in a farcical drama staged by the villagers. The peasant comes, falls at the feet of the Thakur and weeps. The Thakur, after much hesitation, consents to lend him ten rupees. The promissory note is written and it is signed by the peasant. The Thakur then gives him five rupees. The peasant is taken aback. He says: "But they are only five, master."

"They are not five; they are ten. Go home and count them again."

"No, master, they are actually five."

"One rupee as your *nazrana*," says the moneylender.

"Yes, master."

"One rupee for the draft."

"Yes, master."

"One rupee for the Government paper."

"Yes, master."

"One rupee as the *dasturi*?"

"Yes, master."

"And five cash. Does it make ten or not?"

"Then, master, keep these five, too, with you for me," says the peasant.

"What a fool you are."

"No, master. One rupee as *nazar* to the Senior Thakurani; one rupee for her *pan-beeda*. One rupee as *nazar* to the Junior Thakurani and another for her *pan-beeda*. The balance, one rupee, for your last rites."

Premchand was so moved by the suffering of the peasant that in his last days he lost his faith in the existence of God, for to believe in God also implies the belief in His kindness and fatherliness.

Premchand portrays another, perhaps more hideous and sinister picture of this system. Mr. Khanna has established a Sugar Mill near Hori's village. The entire produce of the village, therefore, is sent to it. There is a sort of fraternity between the moneylenders and Mr. Khanna's agents. Jhinguri Shah looks to the transactions "so that his clients may not be cheated." When Hori's turn for receiving the money comes, it is Jhinguri Shah who receives the money and, out of the 120 rupees that he receives, he deducts 95 and pays him 25, which also is snatched away by Nokhe Ram, who accosts Hori as soon as he goes out of the premises. As a result, Hori comes home empty-handed, where is abject poverty. Premchand's description of poverty brings tears to the readers' eyes.

On the way home, Hori meets Giridhar who is tipsy with toddy. He says to Hori: "Jhinguria has taken all, Hori Kaka. He hasn't left a pice with me—the brute. I wept, I entreated, but that tyrant would have no pity."

Sobha put in: "But you are drunk with toddy and still you say that he has not left you anything."

Giridhar replies, pointing to his stomach: "it is evening now. Honestly, not a drop of water has gone down my throat. I hid a one-anna piece in my mouth, which I spent on toddy. I said to myself: 'Man, you

have sweated the whole year through. Have the fun of toddy one day.' But, to tell you the truth, I am not drunk. How could one be drunk with a stuff worth one anna...It is so very good, Kaka, the account is cleared. I borrowed 20 and have paid 160. Is there a limit?"

Indeed there is none. Listen to what Gobar finds, when he returns from the city :

One portion of the house was about to collapse. On Hori's doorsteps, there was only one bullock and this one too was half dead. Hori's wasn't an individual case. The entire village had the same sorry tale to tell... There was not one man whose condition was above pity. It looked as if in their bodies there was not life, but grief, making them dance like puppets. They went about, they worked, they were ground down only because they were fated to be so. There was no hope for them in life; they had no ambition. It was as if the very source of their life had dried up; all its verdure was gone. It was the harvesting season, but there was no corn. Unhappiness was writ large upon every face. A major portion of the produce had been sold away, while it had not yet gone beyond the winnowing place, to the moneylenders and the petty officials. That which was left belonged to others. ... The future of the peasant is dark; he sees no way out; all his senses are dead and dulled; before his house, there are heaps of refuse and waste which stinks, but his sense of smell is dead. His eyes are without a beam. At dusk, jackals roam about his house. None, however, takes notice of it, or feels sorry about it... Whatsoever is placed before them, and howsoever, they eat—just as the engine eats coal. What a shame that even their oxen do not put their mouth into the manger, unless there is gram flour. But they have just to fill the stomach. Taste is immaterial. Indeed, their palates do not know what taste is. They, these peasants, therefore, would be dishonest for half a pice, strike anybody for a handful of grain. And so deep is their degeneration that they cannot differentiate between self-respect and shame.*

One is led to ask what is the peasant's ambition. When Sobha asks Hori if ever they will be free from the moneylenders' clutches, Hori says:

There is no hope in this life. We ask neither for a kingdom nor for a throne, not even for comfort. We want to have coarse meals and coarse clothes, and to live with honour intact. But even that is denied to us.

For Hori, his life is a living death. Premchand says:

After a struggle lasting for thirty years, to-day Hori has lost his battle. His defeat is final. He has been, as it were, made to stand at the city gates. Whosoever enters it, spits at his face and he cries out to them: 'Brethren, I deserve your pity. I never knew what the June heat or what the winter chill or rain was. Dissect this

*The translation is not literal but conveys the general sense of Premchand's narration.

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body and see if there is life in it. See how hard it has been kicked to pieces and trampled under foot. Ask it: 'Have you ever known what comfort is? Have you ever enjoyed shade?"

And in spite of all this, what he gets is mere insults. Still he lives—an impotent man, greedy, mean. . .

Hori's end comes soon, sooner than one could have expected. He is heavily under debt. To earn his bread and to pay the interest on the loans, he has been forced by circumstances to take loans and these are ever piling up, he makes ropes by night and works on double shift as a labourer on the road, for now only that is left to him. After days of semi-starvation, one day he collapses on the roadside, to be brought home to die. There is no money in the house to send for the doctor. And now again, the moneylender comes, this time in the shape of the heartless brahmin, with the sanction and authority of religion and custom behind him. Pandit Data Din says: "The end is come. Let Hori give away a cow with his dying hand to seek his salvation." But there is no cow in the house, nor is there money for it. There are only 20 annas in the house, the previous night's earnings. Dhaniya brings it, puts it into the hand of the brahmin and says: "Maharaj, there is no cow in the house, not even a she-calf. And there is neither money, save these 20 annas, which is all that is left in the house. This is his *gaudan*." She faints: Hori dies. The curtain drops: The novel ends.

Mischievous Southward Wind!

BY SRINIVASA

Mischievous Southward Wind!

Blow not hither thy sweet load of fragrance
of flowers that bloom not for my eyes;

Blow not hither in fragments the melodies of songs
of maidens whose beauty is not for my eyes;

But blow past me and carry my essence and song,
To the maiden, who, by my eyes to be seen, does long.

Ah! How Beautiful

(A Reverie)

BY C. R. K. MURTHI

If happiness were to consist in the identification of one's self with the beauty of Nature, there is nothing in this world for me so happy as to be watching the glory of a moon-lit night spreading out its brilliance all over the earth.

With a heart torn asunder by a strange conflict of emotions, I found my way easily enough to the only place which could give me the happiness to forget the momentary sorrows of life. I watched the still waters of the lakes reflecting the moon. I looked at the distant row of trees presenting the appearance of a small hillock. The movement of the fishes was setting up disturbances in the still waters which distorted the image. I could easily see its counterpart in my mind. The crickets were chirping. The hoppers were tittering out a note in unison.

There was something mystical about the nature of things. It gradually began casting its spell over me. There was some inner transformation going on within me and I could feel the initial beats of identification. Instinctively I started humming to myself. I tried an *alapana*. I attempted in vain a *kirtan* of Thyagaraja. I had a dash at Bharati's lyrics. I tried even to whistle out a shrill note. I was in such bad need of some kind of out-pouring of my heart which was threatening to overflow.

From the distance the sound of foot-steps began to disturb the calm of my surroundings. I could also see some white figures moving in the direction where I was sitting. As they approached near I could make them out as washermen carrying their burden home after a day's hard work. The bundle of clothes looked bigger than the man who carried it and how it balanced on his head added to the mystery of the entire situation.

The procession of these toilers approached me very near. The oldest and the most crippled amongst them threw a quick glance at me and passed on his way, completely ignoring my presence. He must have thought me mad to be looking into the still waters at this dead hour of the night when normal human beings must be in their beds. What is beauty to him? The moonlight which had produced in me such a strange sensation has left him cold. He has seen many moon-lit nights like this. Probably, he has seen many a time other mad fellows gazing into the depths of water. He does not find any satisfaction in this gazing pastime. He has his thoughts about some ache in the lower portion of his body.

AH! HOW BEAUTIFUL

A gnawing pain makes his walk uneasy, groaning as he is under the weight of the bundle of wet clothes. He has to walk a mile more to reach his hovel to be welcomed by a tired wife with no happy or contented face. To darkness. To sit and take the morsel of gruel this woman has managed to prepare by standing in the mile-long queue far away in the busy city. His is not an uncommon life. Many like him sped their way in that hour after their day's toil in search of their homes. To eat and to rest. With the appearance of the first flickers of dawn to wake up and travel through the same journey of the struggle for existence. What is moon-light to them?

This passing vision disturbs the current of my thoughts. I look to myself. I have eaten the costliest of food. Filled to the full, I become romantic and start to go out 'mooning'! I find mystery in the little flakes of white clouds. I find mystery in the shadows. I am hypnotised. I feel I am one with Nature and I gloat over this thought. But do I feel any gnawing pain at the bottom of my belly? Ah! Nothing! Contented! Happy!—Nature! Glory!—Divine! But somehow I feel that something is wrong somewhere. I start walking aimlessly to escape from these thoughts.

Two or three motor-cars pass by me. Yells and shouts come out from these vehicles out of tune with the calm of the silent night. The man and woman game again! Men in uniform supposed to defend democracy against Fascist aggression helping themselves to their legitimate share of enjoyment. They are drinking the beauty of the moon-lit night. The scene appears to me all the more incredible.

I walk on engrossed in these thoughts. From afar I hear the wailing of the A. R. P. siren, wailing with its tragic note of warning. At first I mistake it for the howling of jackals. The note becomes clearer and is being repeated from here and there. I could also hear the blowing of whistles. By this time I had managed to reach a more inhabited place. People are moving excitedly in utter confusion. I was still dreaming. So when a firm hand caught hold of my wrist and dragged me inside a shelter and shouted into my ears in an unearthly voice, "Eh! You there, take shelter," I woke up as if from a dead sleep. I found myself surrounded by many others in the same plight inside the dark dismal place. My heart began to thud and pound against my ribs. Suddenly, I could hear a crash. It was like thunder. Soon followed a series of bursts. "The screeching of bombs" said some. "The pounding of AA guns" said some others. You hear the roaring of planes just over your head. Your heart sinks within you. Even the hard-boiled atheist thinks of some imaginary God. You think of your mother. You wait for the last moment. Again, the

sound of crashing near by. The planes must have dropped another load of these glorious messengers of Death. Probably, you think of the beauty of the moon-lit night outside. You may wonder whether the planes have no power of identifying themselves with beauty. Bombs! More bombs! What beautiful things: Shaped so nicely! Coming down with such fine music! Kissing the earth with all the passion of the imaginary world! Sending into the skies innumerable bits of live and dead things. Bombs falling on thatched huts bringing to an end the sad story of the inmates! Bombs starting fires here, there and everywhere! In the end everything in a glorious blaze! The red flames of Destruction rising higher and higher vying with the silver brightness of a stupid-looking and blinking moon! Which is beauty?

Again, the sound of the sirens. This time a continuous note. Danger past! Outside the moon is still blinking. The fires are burning brighter. Is reality the true beauty artists are searching for? I wish it were not.

Calcutta, }
night of 14th June, 1943. }

The Eagle

(Translated from a Bengali poem by Benozin Ahmed)

BY BASUDHA CHAKRAVARTY

Before us is the dark night beset by storm:
Where are you now, oh the mad eagle, bound for the
infinite horizon? Spread out your wings!

Before us dances a cataclysm that in its wild joy
knows no restraints:

But before us is also the blue endless sky of planets, suns and stars.

Before us is an assembly of desires that have broken all
bounds: also the perpetual dream of a new world.

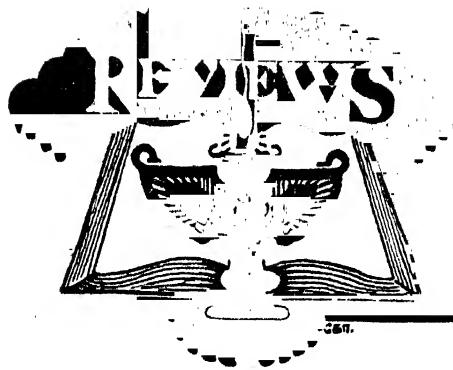
The stream of life flows across the world before us:
it glitters with life;
The voice of Liberty calls to our minds "Come, oh ye!—sharp!"

From within the heart of destruction the new child of creation
is born:

In the depth of night bloom the rays of the new dawn.

The hard way ahead is a beacon of life's pilgrimage:
Though the night ahead is stormy, at the end of darkness
the full moon will rise again.

So listen not to forbiddings:
Oh, you intrepid eagle! Unto the eternal ahead
spread out your wings!



Indo-Anglian Literature by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, pp. ix—70
(International Book House, Ltd., Bombay, Rs. 1/8.)

The Indian Centre of the P. E. N. Association has done well to include in its series of monographs on Indian literatures a survey of Indo-Anglian Literature, that is work in English by Indian writers; for English too is among the languages which India has been employing for the expression of her mind and character through the media of the literary art. In the little book before us, Prof. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar of Belgaum, a well-known literary critic and essayist, presents to us in concise and attractive phrases the modest pageant of India's English authors, from Toru Dutt and Tagore to Gokak and "K. S."—poets, play-wrights, story-tellers, novelists, biographers, essayists, critics, belletrists and exponents of social and cultural philosophies. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar does not pretend to have produced an exhaustive record. That would indeed have been impossible. He has selected for notice only the typical or the more noted authors; and it is no uninteresting or negligible show that we see. The outstanding figures are of course just a few—Toru Dutt, R. C. Dutt, Sarojini, Tagore. Some would perhaps add Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru, Aurobindo and probably Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and Sir Radhakrishnan. It is a point to be decided whether publicists, journalists and jurists may be assigned places amidst the stars in the firmament of pure literature. Anand Mohan Bose, Lalmohan Ghose, Rash Behari, Telang, Ranade, Chandavarkar, Subrahmanyam Aiyar, Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. Natarajan—these (mentioned at random) are names that must be included in any list of masters of a lucid, supple and nervous style of English in India. Not that, with additions so made, the number of first-rate names will grow to be much more than could be counted on one's fingers. But let us not forget that it is not the peaks only, but the unparticularized rocks and boulders also that contribute to the impressiveness of a hill view. Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar has not attempted critical judgements on individual authors; and we must agree that that is not so very necessary for his immediate purpose which is to make us see that the flow in the stream is both copious and continuous and that it has perennial feeders in innumerable springs and freshets.

But one reflection cannot be escaped. For the output of some 70 years, by a country so large as India and one so rich too in literary tradition, the proportion that may be adjudged as of top grade looks rather thin. Toru Dutt began (1876) some ten years earlier than Rudyard Kipling and one is apt to set India's production by the side of England's since that

date and compare both bulk and quality. Even after being reminded that English is not India's natural tongue, and that during these 70 years her best minds have been pre-occupied with political, social and other immediate problems, and further that the greater part of our writing in English has been in journalism and in political, professional and technical literature, one may still not be able to suppress the question—"Is it all worth while?" In the reading lists suggested by Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar, we have some 38 entries under Poetry, 35 under Fiction and Drama, 25 under Miscellaneous Prose and 17 under Criticism. How many of these 140 writers have any survival value, and how much each of them? Is an Indian's excursion into the field of English letters anything more than vanity if not waste of effort?

There are however two ways of considering the matter. One is to ask whether Indians writing in English choose that vehicle in the hope of winning for themselves a place in the Poets' Corner in Westminister Abbey. If that were so, one could not be quite sure of their prospects. Will English literary judges agree to place a volume of Tagore or Sarojini or Aurobindo in the same book-case as they would reserve for the works of Shakespeare or Shelley or Wordsworth? Will they count our best as among their best? It is hardly likely the answer will be unanimous. As contributions to the library of England's own cherished literature, India's English masterpieces may not command their highest price.

But there is the other way of looking at the matter, and it is not a less pertinent or less resultful way. English is an instrument to the Indian not exactly for the insular purpose for which it is to an Englishman. To us English is the medium for communication with the world at large and not with England only. None of the world's languages is the whole world's; and it happens that English among them all has today the widest international reach. It is easier for Europe and America to get a foreign intellectual commodity through the ports of English than through any other. Work done by Indian writers in English is therefore a contribution, may or may not be to England's stock of literature, but certainly to the World's treasury of literature. Whether India's command of the English idiom is adequate or not, India has certainly a vision of life and a way of living which may be of interest and even of inspiration to the international world; and those Indian authors that adopt English as their medium address themselves to that vaster world. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar's little book proves that as interpreters of India's social ethos, her moral sensibilities and her genius for glimpsing the eternal amidst the evanescent, her English authors have put forth such work as should justify perseverance and encourage hope.

D. V. G.

War and Prices—by L. Nemenyi. Gulab Singh and Sons, Lahore 1943. Price, Rs. 1/8.

The Government of India has not blinked the fact of inflation—see the EPT Ordinance or the latest speech of the Viceroy to the Joint Session of the Central Legislature. So there is no need for any apology for its policy—if one can call a series of makeshifts and expedients policy, which Dr. Nemenyi's pamphlet tries to be.

REVIEWS

The vicious spiral has been set in motion in India. Its admitted cause is the exceptional Allied expenditure in the country, which has mostly been offset by sterling payment. This *ad hoc* sterling is money both ways: unit of account in Britain and cover for notes in India. Very little of that sterling payment is covered by domestic taxation and borrowing. There has been no corresponding mopping up of purchasing power thus released. The excess of purchasing power has not been converted into increased imports because of the War. Much of it has been used away in repatriating India's sterling debt and not in each case in the most beneficent way. Today India has become a creditor country with a vengeance. The inevitable—through rising prices—has happened.

According to Prof. Vakil the situation is analogous to that of the palmy days of the great German inflation. The cause is the 'existence of an increase in the money supply of the country more than justified by the level of production.' So he is accused of emphasising (should it not be 'over-emphasised' on p. 15?) the monetary factors, neglecting real factors and not taking into account the psychological factor. To the surprise of Dr. Nemenyi, even Mr. Birla explains the rise of prices entirely by the scarcity of goods and 'attaches no influence (importance?) to the expansion of currency and to speculation and hoarding of commodities.' (pp. 27, 35). By the way, if there is any criticism of Mr. Birla's analysis it is the doubt whether his 'scarcity of goods' includes their maldistribution among consumers. In fact, Dr. Nemenyi over-emphasises the psychological factor which affects the real factors via the monetary factor.

After a rather elaborate, not too clear or convincing discussion of these and other minor opinions, Dr. Nemenyi splashes some conclusions: that there has been no excessive expansion of purchasing power—at least till March 1943; that the Government of India's sterling finance is quite sound: that 'the notes issued against sterling balances, not utilised for repayment of external debts, were *genuinely* required for the currency needs of an expanded war-time economy,' (p. 35. Italics mine;) and that the increased note issue has had no inflationary effect because of the fall in the velocity of notes and bank deposits and hoarding.

Dr. Nemenyi's discovery is that the financial position of March 1943 is the desideratum of Indian monetary policy. He suggests taxation almost to a degree of ruthlessness, (p. 41); compulsory saving schemes (pp. 40 ff.); payment of bonuses and dividends above a certain minimum (and 'abnormal' is a word missing from the author's vocabulary) after the War (p. 40); eradication of speculation and hoarding by powerful regulations of forward markets (p. 40); and expansion of production (p. 41).

But the benefits of self-deception are limited. The Government of India has implemented the substance of Dr. Nemenyi's proposals? Why have not prices made good weather of it? Does this indicate the drastic demonetisation of sterling by creating a Sterling Sterilisation Fund either by amending the Reserve Bank of India Act or by issuing one more ordinance? Or, the gradual withdrawal of rural purchasing power by tempting the lately enriched agriculturist (and thus wiping out the newly won rural market for manufactured goods) with large-scale sales of gold and silver imported under the Lend-Lease Programme?

Monetary policy is inseparable from the social context. India is neither U. S. where policing the price-level is done by seven-point programmes and General Maxes (Maximum Price Regulations) nor U. K., where Labour plays politics with the cost of living and dying. That India is the country of villages whose backbone is the agriculturist is, no doubt, a cliche. But, that part of the increased purchasing power which does not deserve to be frozen is with the agriculturist is a truth which disarms Dr. Nemenyi's proposals.

Taxation and forced savings had had their day. Why not greater control of production, rationing (and with it the abolition of racketeering) of necessities and constructive planning of the Indian economy get their innings?

A. N. SUBRAHMANYAM.

'The night is heavy—By Krishan Shungloo.' Free India Publications, Lahore. Price Rs. 3/-.

In order to give every bit of sincerity and forcefulness possible to their utterance, Western poets, during the last fifty years, have had to ignore certain conventional forms. The more coherent, the more inspired, and the more inspiring such utterance is, the more we are ourselves ready to overlook metrical technique and the conventional graces of form. It is at the same time natural that in such a state of flux the impostor and the mere imitator should demand the same attention as the genuine poet.

It is fortunate that in India, where literary criticism is not too strict, we do not have a plethora of "poets;" fortunate also that when a new poet like Krishan Shungloo, comes into our ken he is one whose poetry commands our willing attention.

These poems are very personal, as some of the best poetry is, and one cannot complain on that score. The Spanish war (in which evidently some of his close friends lost their lives and in which his sympathies were, rightly, on the Republican side) has evoked some of the poems. Others are meditations on the "ugly realities" of life, as the author himself terms them, in different places such as Paris, Berlin and Istanbul. In some of these pieces harlotry lies a bit too heavily for my liking. Not all the exploits of undergraduates on holiday are worthy of song. Of course, if the experience can be distilled and presented to the world as poetry, one would not ask under what circumstances the poet realised his profundities. This is about my one quarrel with Mr. Shungloo—that his frauleins and mademoiselles are dragged in quite unnecessarily and to the disadvantage of the train of thought the reader is trying to follow. But this is a small point.

Poets like Stephen Spender bring words like telephone freely into their verse; and even a master-singer like Yeats in his latter pieces rhymed "fix" with "politics." So why grudge Mr. Shungloo a harmless and not unpoetical a word like "news-reel"? All the same, I wish he had not used it in the following context (because the reader has just been lifted to a rather solemn plane of thought):

"what if my body be a news-reel
that tells the whole truth"

REVIEWS

No poet who feels can escape from the ugly realities of life at the present day, nor must he try to: but Mr. Shungloo's phrasing and cadence seem to me at their happiest in lines like:

falls falls
the gentle rain
singing on my skin
and the wood is wet
bathed in liquid green
the broken branches glisten
in the hissing wind
and the field's a pond
with a million ripples ridden
the birds are hurrying home
in the pregnant calm
of sunsent ecstasies

how trivial now appear
comforts of a heated room
and the precious things of my existence

Therefore, I hope, that in his second book of poems we shall have more poems like the one quoted with its vivid descriptions. "the night is heavy" is full of promise which makes one look forward to Mr. Shungloo's further efforts.

J. VIJAYA-TUNGA.

Gandhi against Fascism: Edited by Jag Parvesh Chunder: Free India Publications, Lahore. Price Rs. 2/- Pages IX—102.

This is a compilation from Gandhiji's writings from 1937-42 of articles and notes in *Harijan*, statements issued by him and letters written, which contain what might be called the "foreign policy" of the great leader and his reactions to the conflicts going on in Europe. That he is a great believer in non-violence has not blunted the edge of his keenness to oppose Fascism—as represented by Germany or Japan. The book is a valuable compilation which is sure to convince all those who are open-minded that Gandhiji and the other Congress leaders (whose opinions are also reproduced in the Appendix) have been avowed opponents of Nazism and Fascism all along—even when statesmen belonging to the Allied countries appeared to be wobbling in their foreign policy five years ago.

K

The Graphic Art of U. S. S. R. by Sheik Ahmed: Free India Publications, Lahore, Price As. 4. Pages 16.

In this interesting pamphlet the author describes how since the October Revolution, "art has been used as a great factor in socialist construction and in organising the education of the masses." The Soviet masses have been more art-minded; exhibitions of art are largely attended; and art more widely practised than ever before, for, as Lenin said: "You may become communists only then, when you will enrich your mind with the knowledge of all those treasures which humanity has provided."

K

Kesava Pandita's *Dandaniti* (Criminal Jurisprudence) — by V. S. Bendrey :—No. 59 in the *Sviya Granthamala Series* published by the Bharata Itihāsa Samsodhaka Mandala, Poona :—(Price Rs. 3.)

The book under review is a Sanskrit work and is said to be a part of Kesava Pandita's *Nitimanjari* which was, in its turn, intended to be a part of his still greater compilation *Dharmakalpalata*. Manuscripts of *Nitimanjari* and *Dharmakalpalata* have yet to be discovered. But two manuscripts of the present work, which the author, Kesava Pandita, called *Dandanitiprakaranam*, were discovered in the Tanjore Palace Library. Mr. Bendrey has edited and published the work under the title *Dandaniti*. The author, Kesava Pandita, or Kesava Bhatta as he was also called, lived during the days of Sivaji Maharaja and Sambhaji Maharaja. Mr. Bendrey thinks that the work was written between 1680 and 1683 A. D. and that it is likely that the work was presented to Sambhaji Raja on the occasion of his coronation in 1681 A. D.

In the present book the Sanskrit text is preceded by discussions relating to three subjects, viz., (1) a scholarly and documented account in English of Kesava Bhatta's life and work; (2) a sketch in English of the national upheaval during the *Sivasahi* or pre-Peshwa period; and (3) an account, also in English, of Raghunathapandita Panditram who introduced Kesava Bhatta to Sivaji Maharaja and enabled the former to gain the favour of the latter.

The Sanskrit text is divided into six chapters. Beyond practically rendering into English the headings of the various chapters, the Editor has not in his *Introduction* enlightened the reader much in regard to the contents of the chapters. But this is because the Editor wants to publish separately a long and detailed essay on "Indian Criminal Jurisprudence in Ancient and Historic Times," as soon as the present period of scarcity of paper is over.

Dandaniti is practically a digest of the rules laid down in the ancient Indian text-books relating to criminal law and its administration, with notes and explanations by Kesava Bhatta. The punishments prescribed may seem to modern minds often barbarous; and in many cases the importance given to certain kinds of so-called offences does not seem to accord with modern views. But, as the Editor remarks, books like the present one indicate "the contemporary conditions of the social, political and religious structure of the country." But they are also important for another reason. There is great truth in the statement of Clarence Darrow, in his "*Crime—its Cause and Treatment*," that in its essence a crime is a violation of the more important amongst the habits and customs of life and the "folk-ways" of the community. But habits and customs change; so do the ideas of right and wrong, and along with them the views regarding crime and its punishment. Books like the present one are, therefore, important as showing the changing values of customs and institutions with the progress of time. The publication of the learned editor's contemplated treatise on Indian Criminal Jurisprudence may be therefore eagerly awaited, as it should be a contribution not merely to Indian Penology but to Indian Sociology.

T. BHUJANGA RAO.

REVIEWS

Iraq by Seton Lloyd—(Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs, No. 13. (Price annas six).

Iraq had its genesis in the political exigencies of the Allies after the last War and, therefore, its boundaries were not related to any historical traditions. Iraq has been independent, we are told, for thirteen years and is a rich country which is potentially richer still. But it is unprogressive, its agriculture is backward and its grain-market unstable. Moreover, the presence of an Allied army in the country coupled with the "war effort" for which the country is bending its resources have affected the economic life of the country adversely for the present; but we are assured that Iraq is becoming a creditor nation, a fact from which that country is expected to hope for much after the War. Mr. Seton Lloyd is convinced that it is either too early, or unnecessary, for the Iraqi to worry about his political condition and is relieved to find that the Iraqi mind is now "less obsessed with unfulfilled nationalist ambitions" and can adapt itself "more readily to economic and social reflection," whatever that may be.

R. K. S.

The Aborigines—by Verrier Elwin (Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs No. 14. Price annas six).

The extent of the 'Aboriginal' problem in India is surveyed and means of improving the lot of these 'real swadeshi products' considered. Of the 25 millions aborigines, divided into several endogamous tribes and subdivided into numerous exogamous clans, very few have survived the clash with culture unscathed. The Gond Raja who reads Aldous Huxley, the Khasi woman who was a Cabinet Minister and the Pardhan who became a Station Master are rare instances. Four-fifths of the aboriginal population suffered a loss of nerve as a result of the baneful contact with puritan reformers, government officials, christian missionaries and shrewd businessmen from the plains. The aboriginal is losing his grip over his heritage of language, music, tribal ritual, and with it, losing the beauty and naturalness of his simple life. Mr. Elwin's solution of the problem indicates his disagreement with those who would "uplift" the "backward classes." He advocates a policy of temporary isolation and protection for the aborigines, and for their civilized neighbours, the lawyer, the doctor, the merchant and the official, a policy of immediate reform. Until "civilization itself is civilized," he wants the aboriginal left alone.

R. K. S.

The Way of the Guru—Dr. P. Natarajan, M.A., D.Litt (Paris), L.T., M.R.S.T. The Gurukul Publishing House, Nilgiris, Re. 1/8. Pages 102.

The book provides glimpses into the life of Sri Narayana Guru, the great saint and reformer of Kerala, who passed away in September 1928 at the age of 72. The Guru's simplicity of life and manner, his deep spirituality which exercised a strong and pervasive influence on all those who came into contact with him, his passion to inculcate pure modes of worship of the one God, and his broad tolerance of spirit are all finely brought out in these sketches, which are written with deep devotion and intimate knowledge. One wishes, however, that more biographical details of the Guru's life had been provided. The book is well written and transports the reader to the region of thought which Sri Narayana Guru radiated.

C. R. S.

KANNADA

Tenali Ramakrishna—A play in Kannada. By Mr. C. K. Venkata-
amaiya, M.A., LL.B., Published by Manohara Grantha Pustaka Samiti,
Dharwar, Crown 8 Vo. 4 plus 95, Price Re. 1.

'*Tenali Ramakrishna*' is a pleasant play dealing with the character of the hero of that name, who is placed against a historical background. It is obvious from the play that the chief interest of the author is to vindicate the character of the hero. It is perhaps owing to this reason that he has dispensed with some of the requirements of plot construction in vogue. A series of delightful pictures have been connected by the striking presence of the hero. In the Preface the author says: "Tenali Ramakrishna's genius and learning, his poetic capability, the flow of his humour, were extraordinary..... I was grieved at the notoriety spread concerning him by the many improbable incidents and unfounded stories that have cropped up around him."

Ramakrishna is not a clown meant to amuse the King in moments of lassitude. He is not a humbug eager to taste pleasure on the sly. He is a profound scholar and a poet of rare genius. He is a patriot of ardent mettle. He is the chief means of saving the Karnataka Empire from disruption and ruin. He enearths conspiracies and exposes traitors. He saves the King's life.

The other *dramatis personae*, many of whom are historical persons, are imagined and delineated in a manner suitable to the circumstances of the play. The minor characters are skilfully handled.

There is a succession of scenes which call before the mind's eye a vivid picture of those days of strict piety and unswerving loyalty, of incessant intrigue, unceasing warfare, and splendid enjoyment.

B. C.

Modagalu or "Clouds" by—*Sri Swami*.—Publishers: Manohara Grantha Pustaka Samithi, Dharwar. Price: Re. 1. Pages 158 Cr. 8 Vo.

This book is a collection of seven short stories in Kannada. Six of them were written in 1942; so they are the author's latest. In the Preface the writer compares them to the clouds of Kartika which, for all their variety of form, do not contain any beneficent rains and are perhaps thin and have no weight. The comparison is not very close, however. Obviously, the author is yet learning to write and has a way of narration. He has observed details of dress and ornament; pose of body and movement of limbs in the world of girls and women. The description of such details is perhaps a little too much in the book.

Principal Gokak has rightly observed in the Introduction that though there is variety in the characters chosen there is neither depth nor strength in characterisation. Some of the endings are not convincing and do not seem inevitable. The author has collected most of the materials needful to a writer; if he can bestow more forethought on plot and pay attention to the analysis of the mental processes of the characters and give us a peep into their souls we should love his stories all the more.

The present collection is only a second harvest. The stories are readable and will be welcomed by the Kannada reading public.

S. M.

REVIEWS

Hoovina Hasige—(Bed of Flowers) by Hoysala—Published by the Manohara Granthamala, Dharwar. (Price Re. 1/-.)

This is a collection of short stories, and includes, besides stories from English literature and Islamic sources, the author's own stories taken from real life or presenting local legends. "Hoysala" shows a keen insight into child imagination, and has made the narration quite interesting, though now and then it suffers from verbosity. The book is a welcome addition to children's literature in Kannada, which the author has already done much to enrich.

A. K. P.

Samskrita Natakakathegalu—Part I, by M. S. Subrahmany Sastry, Bangalore City. Price Re. 1/4. Pages 144.

The book contains stories in Kannada of five Sanskrit dramas; Bhasa's *Pratima*; Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* and *Malavikagnimitra*; Sri Harsha's *Nagananda*; Bhattacharyya's *Venisamhara*, after the manner of Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. The author is a Sanskrit scholar wielding a prose style in Kannada that is dignified and polished. The book is a valuable introduction to the great Sanskrit dramas. We trust the author will give us more of such stories in further volumes.

K.

TELUGU

Mana India—Original: Minoo Masani's "Our India" Translated by Chinta Dikshitulu; Illustrations by C. H. G. Moorhouse. Publishers "The Oxford University Press." Price Re. 1/8.

"*Mana India*" is the Telugu translation of Masani's "Our India." The translation is faithful to the original and in fine Telugu idiom. Chinta Dikshitulu by adopting the spoken dialect, has made his work easily accessible to young students as well as women folk. The style is as simple as it can be. The get up is good. The only complaint that may be made is the use of small types for the book.

K. S. J.

TAMIL

Kumari Malar 5 and 6—Sri A. K. Chettiar, Cathedral Road, P.O., Madras.

The fifth and sixth issues of this new periodical (monthly) in Tamil edited and published by A. K. Chettiar on the model of the "Penguin New Writing" series will be welcomed by the Tamil public. They are got up in book form and consist of articles contributed by Tamil writers of standing. The fare offered is varied: sketches, stories, poems, essays etc. The get-up, binding and printing are elegant and attractive.

V. G.



Rabindranath Tagore on Indian History

The Viswabharati Quarterly May-July, 1943 publishes portions of an address delivered by RABINDRANATH TAGORE in July 1927, under the heading "Greater India," translated from Bengali by Dr. Kalidas Nag. The following is an extract from it:

In early life I began reading the so-called history of India. From day to day was inflicted upon me the torture of cramming the names and dates of the dismal chronicle of India's repeated defeats and humiliations in her political competition with foreigners from Alexander to Clive. In that historical desert of indignities, we tried desperately to satisfy our intense hunger for national glorification, out of the slender harvest of the oasis of Rajput Chivalry. It is known to all with what a feverish excitement we tried in those days to press into our service Tod's *Annals of Rajasthan* to enrich our Bengali poetry, drama and romance. That clearly showed how direly we had been starving in the process of discovering the true greatness of our country, which was not a mere geographical expression but a vast continent of human aspirations and character. The external nature of our country, no doubt, builds our body, but our character grows with the inspiration we derive from the world of human aspirations; and if we know that world to be petty and low, then we earn no strength to dispel our depression of spirit, merely by reading the history of the heroic nations that are foreigners.

* * * *

Art in Schools

It may interest educationists in other parts of India, to know that an effort is being made in Bengal to introduce "Picture Hours in the Schools," with the help of colour post-cards of famous masterpieces of painting—a very effective, yet a cheap apparatus of study suitable for conditions prevailing in India. I have just finished a series of an intensive course of lectures on the History of Art for the benefit of a group of Art-teachers at the Calcutta University, almost exclusively illustrated with a series of post-cards representing significant Masterpieces of Art of all the Schools.

But the Calcutta University's humble efforts to train a small band of Art-teachers to take up duties in schools to develop interest in Art, appreciative and creative, appear to pale into insignificance in comparison with the greater achievement of the Travancore University in sending out a formidable battalion of 320 graduates, with L.T., degrees, to take up strategic positions in Schools to vanquish the prevailing ignorance of Art and to make our students art-minded. But the great problem is to provide

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these teachers with the necessary arms, implements, and apparatuses, for Art is a subject which cannot be talked about, but has to be demonstrated, at each step, by visual examples. Before every School has its Gallery of Pictures it is impossible even for trained teachers to accomplish much. Yet the beginnings have to be laid in the Schools, for long before the school boy matriculates and comes to his University, his hunger for beauty is starved out by our too much bookish education.—(O. C. GANGULY in the *Modern Review*—August 1943.)

Music in Modern China.

It is remarkable to observe that singing lessons are given to nearly every private and public organisation. In every such organisation a chorus band of selected singers is formed. In case any organisation is too poor to afford a big gathering hall, its members stand together in an open space, with the written songs posted on a wall, or in case a wall is not available, on a wooden board. Singing is no longer a classroom monopoly. On every street corner, in great or small cities of Free China, on every day from morning till evening, in every public meeting, rural or urban, singing voices are heard. A European, who escaped from Hongkong, recently came to India, and told me that during his two months' travel through the provinces of Kwangung, Kwangsi, Kweiyang and Yunnan, in every town he visited he heard the rich volume of mass singing which he had never heard before. "It is," he said, "the voice of New China."

Such success is due largely to the personal inspiration of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. It perhaps sounds strange to you that such a minor thing as singing has to be taken care of by a national leader. But it is a fact. As a soldier he knows how great is the value of military songs to an army, and how much greater it would be to the people as a whole. As a classical scholar he knows that vocal science is a branch of old Chinese culture which had been frequently emphasized by Confucius, as one of the two basic means of successful political administration, and worth while reviving. In the Central Training Corps at Chungking, of which the Generalissimo himself is the President, and at which he lectures at least twice a week to the members who are high military or civil officers of various parts and departments of the country, a class of Teachers of Music and Singing had been set up. Two hundred trained teachers are pouring out from it every half year, thus supplying sufficiently the demand of singing China.—(LIN YIH-LING in the course of an article "China's Cultural Front" in the *Calcutta Review*, September 1943.)

Oriental and Occidental Pandits.

DR. BHAGAVAN DAS, in the course of an article on "Modern Indian Renaissance and *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*" (Sir Radha-krishnan's book) in the *Journal of the Benares Hindu University*, has the following :

The later works of the 'new' (navya) Vedanta (Metaphysic), Nyaya (Logic) Mimamsa (Ethic, Exegetic, and Jurisprudence), and even Vyakarana (Grammar), are over-full of barren logic-chopping, tiresomely smart hair-splitting, verbal juggling, intellectual acrobatics, heavy pedantry. If there

is any usefulness in them at all, it is that they make the clever student's mind more nimble, supple, strong; even as physical gymnastics, the muscles. . . .

This perverse development of philosophy, in the direction of arid logomachy and mystifying jargon, is far from absent in even the modern scientific west. One small instance will suffice. Some two years ago, I happened to pick up a volume of the well-known Home University Library, entitled *Recent Philosophy*, by John Laird (pub. 1936). I glanced through the Introduction. It was brightly written. I proceeded to read the rest. I found the brightness marred more and more frequently, as the pages went past, by sudden emergences of strange, dark, even fearful, words. I began to note these down on the fly-leaves. At the end, the number of those ending in 'ism' amounted to one hundred and twenty-one, each different from the others. And I had probably missed jotting down some others. What does the reader think of 'heuristicism,' 'aporeticism,' 'synecchism,' 'tychism,' 'eidetic phenomenologism,' 'absolutistic normative ethicalism,' 'noodicism,' 'logistical positivism,' 'subjective transsubjectivism,' and 'glottologicalism,' and 'gignomenologism!' Besides the 'isms,' there were some equally amazing 'ologies' and 'ogonies,' f. i. 'axiology,' 'psychomegathology,' and 'heterogony.' The Samskrit *vada* is an exact equivalent of 'ism' and 'ology'; can be tacked on to any word; and has been, to many scores, yielding as many formidable words, which have neither earthly nor heavenly use. On no page of Laird's book was there any mention of any connection between any of these astonishing words and views, supposed to be 'philosophy,' and human welfare and social structure; except one, in which there was a passing reference to Marx's 'dialectical materialism' and the now famous 'isms,' Nazism, Fascism, and Communism.

THE ARYAN PATH

Editor: SOPHIA WADIA

STANDS FOR IDEALISTIC AND CULTURAL AIMS

IDEALS free from Sectarianism. DISCUSSIONS free from Politics.

CULTURE free from National or Racial Bias.

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QUARTERLY

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'Triveni' is devoted to Art, Literature, and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

'Triveni' seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

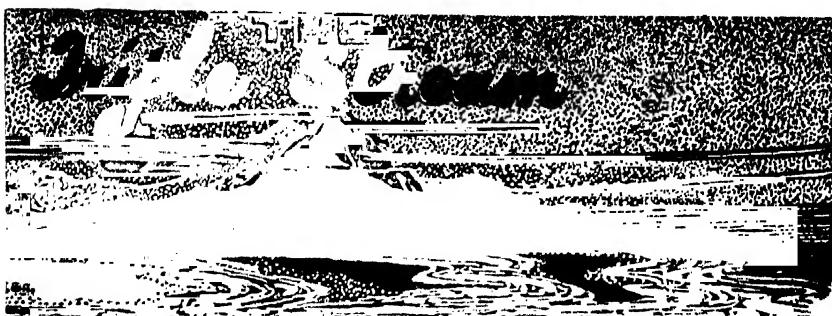
May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the 'Triveni'—the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power!

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To CONTRIBUTORS: Contributions are invited on all aspects of the modern Indian awakening specially in so far as they relate to the cultural life of India. English translations from outstanding writers in the different Indian languages are specially welcome. Contributions, however, should not exceed 3,000 words ordinarily.

*.... he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain ! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure !*

—THE SONG CELESTIAL



THE SARGENT SCHEME

A bold plan for educational reconstruction is before the nation in the Sargent Scheme. Our first reaction to the bare outlines that have been released to the public is a favourable one. The plan, for the first time in this country, recognises the necessity for large scale planning on a nationwide scale along lines that have become familiar to us in the recent history of Russia.

The figures connected with the Scheme are staggering at first sight. It will cost 313 crores annually when it comes into full working order in about fifty years' time. It provides for a thorough school medical service ; the elimination of illiteracy, the provision of kindergartens where a large number of women teachers will be employed, free elementary education, and generous scholarships for the secondary stage, continuation of state aid to adult education and provision for technical instruction, including agriculture, are the main features envisaged.

Any scheme conceived from the central headquarters at New Delhi is bound to look upon educational problems from an angle in which the nation as a whole is taken into account. In the case of India, where a variety of traditions exist side by side, any plan of public education is bound to appear insipid and commonplace in comparison with plans made by private bodies. The modern educational tendency is to stress the importance of the individual child. In spite of the boldness which characterises the Sargent Scheme, the items fail to reach the subjective zones of the personality of the child where the task of education may be said really to begin.

India must be able to afford a thorough-going plan of public and universal education of a basic character. At the same time there must be ample scope to take into account those aspects which make an attempt to reach the personality of the individual child. The Scheme that is before us is, not lacking in reference to such aspect. It refers to the Technical High School, which it says is "an important new idea aiming at giving an all-round education with a technical bias for pupils of ability, so as to satisfy the aptitudes of those who want a practical course and the need of industry and commerce for intelligent young workers." This new type of school is what is most interesting in the Sargent Scheme where it seems to come in line with plans formulated by the Nation itself independently of the Central Government.

The Inter-University Board which met at Hyderabad recently has blessed the Scheme and "recommends for adoption as soon as possible the principle of compulsion for all boys and girls for a period of eight years from the age of five.....during which period the pupils should have an opportunity of learning through activity in arts and crafts.....The medium of instruction and examination in the High School stage shall be the mother tongue."

We are glad that the claims of the "Wardha Scheme of Education," which has been in cold storage for sometime, have not been lost sight of by India's leading educationists. The Inter-University Board has also reiterated its faith in the mother tongue medium in schools, and even in colleges wherever possible.

VIKRAMADITYA'S TWO-THOUSANDTH ANNIVERSARY

The Two-thousandth anniversary of Vikramaditya who founded the Samvat Era, is being celebrated this year. Not many countries outside India can indulge in the luxury of celebrating a 2,000th anniversary! The Vikrama Era still holds the field in North India, though the Christian Era has displaced it from public memory so far, at any rate, as many English-educated Indians are concerned. Vikramaditya was the beau ideal of a great ruler, wise, powerful and magnificent, one who symbolises the longings and aspirations of the national genius: The solidarity of Indian people, and the Indianisation of alien populations were the great achievements of this illustrious ruler. His name was more a title, which other great monarchs of India also delighted to assume. Sri K. M. Munshi, who delivered an address on "Vikramaditya : Our Pillar of Fire "at the Cawnpore celebrations on 9th December thus sums up Vikramaditya's achievements :

'THE TRIPLE STREAM'

"The glorious empire of Magadha which Shishunaga founded continued till 79 B. C. giving India the unity of social organisation and cultural outlook. But the power of Magadha declined. The Barbarians—the Bactio-Greeks, the Parthians, the Yueh-chis—broke into India. Then came this mighty Vikramaditya. No details of his exploits have come down to us. But he drove out, repressed, absorbed the Barbarians,—a mighty feat which, in the national mind of India, came to be carved in letters of undying fire.

"Parasurama was divine; he destroyed the enemies of Dharma; but was too fierce to be loved. Sri Krishna was divine too; he stood for Dharma; but he wore no crown. Asoka upheld Dharma but inherited an empire already rendered safe. But this Vikramaditya became dearer, for he was human. He drove out the Barbarians; he founded a political power of strength; he inspired literature and art; he protected the Dharma; above all he looked after the needy and the distressed. He was a wonderful composite of the shining memories of Parasurama and Sri Krishna, of Buddha and Asoka; infinitely nearer to us by his more human and therefore endearing light.

"Vikramaditya henceforward became the beloved of the nation."

ROMAIN ROLLAND

In the passing of Romain Rolland, the world has lost a rare idealist, and a great citizen of the world. His was a voice that was raised again and again in the cause of pacifism, of the value of the deeper verities of human life, and of the unity of the human race behind the diversity of external forms and dividing barriers of race, language and religion. He exercises a peculiar fascination on the intelligentsia of this country, as much as the spiritual and ethical ideals of India exercised, in turn, a fascination on him. He lived more or less the life of a recluse, and it is to be regretted that he could not visit and establish more personal contacts in a land which he did so much to interpret to the Western world. His studies of Tagore and Gandhi, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who have moulded the thoughts and ideals of modern India more than any other modern Indians have done, are remarkable for their insight and perspicacity. These luminous accounts of modern Indian heroes may be said to have provided the bridge over which numerous other Europeans on the Continent found a correct approach to the heart and the genius of India. This is work for which India will ever be profoundly grateful. The silent influence of the labour of love such as Romain Rolland undertook may not bear immediate fruit nor appear on the surface: and may be altogether lost on those who ride today on the wave-crests of power. But ideas which

embody truth win in the long run, though the weeds of propaganda—which in the modern world grow thick and fast—appear to choke up the still small voice of truth. Romain Rolland's lone and even pathetic figure amidst the turmoil and frenzy of European conflagration makes its own mute and irresistible appeal to the idealists in every land.

PROHIBITION REVERSED

A great urge for moral and social reform in the 'dry' districts of the Madras Presidency has been frustrated by the decision of the Madras Government to reverse the policy of Prohibition with effect from January 1944. The drive against drinks and drugs has been among the major items in the campaign of 'self-purification' inaugurated by Gandhiji over twenty years ago. A nation-wide impulse was generated amounting to a peaceful revolution; and many unknown heroes, fired with the zeal to save their unfortunate brethren and sisters from the grip of drink faced lathi blows and worse and picketed liquor shops and sustained the enthusiasm of the people for the reform. It is such large impulses sweeping like tidal waves that lie at the back of all great social reconstruction (as pointed out by Bertrand Russell, for instance). The hostility and greed of vested interests and the apathy of administrators failed to kill the spirit of reformers. As soon as the Congress ministries came into power in several provinces, a beginning was made to introduce Prohibition by stages. Rajaji, who has been the most indefatigable campaigner in the cause, lost no time in getting the measure passed through the Madras Legislatures; and before the measure was actually put into operation in the Salem District, he undertook a tour through the area. Public memory is not so short that it could have forgotten the jubilant scenes that were witnessed six years ago, that made the Premier's tour a triumphal procession marked by outbursts of tremendous popular enthusiasm.

In the light of these circumstances, the statements of leaders in Madras, opposed to the Congress, which seek to make out that Prohibition was a fad of Rajaji's, and betray a feeling of personal prejudice against the Madras Premier, have been the most unkindest cut of all. One can understand how the average Britisher, with his special notions of individual freedom, looks upon the failure of Prohibition in America, with a 'I told you so', and cannot contemplate without a shudder any administration interfering with his 'innocent' craving for drink. Mr. J. B. S. Haldane, the distinguished Bio-chemist, who has deigned to write an essay on "Mr. Gandhi and Bio-Chemistry", for instance, speaks from an exalted altitude

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of scientific detachment of the deprivation of vitamin B present in toddy for the poor Indian masses as a result of Gandhiji's campaign. (How should Mr. Haldane understand enough about the Indian dietary to know of the other possible sources of vitamin B?) Far from being socially fashionable, drink has been anathema both to the Hindu and Muslim and the better mind of India has never sympathised with the drink traffic legalised by Government. The Government of Madras have failed to appreciate the strength and tenour of deep-rooted public sentiment in India in this matter.

PICTURE PRODUCTION

One of the gratifying signs of the rapidly growing picture production Industry in India is the making of pictures with fine historical and biographical themes and portraying the cultural life of India in a manner that will leave an enduring impression on those who witness them. The making of such pictures involves great labour—the collaboration of specialists and a highly cultured and patriotic motive on the part of the directors and the financiers. We have in mind pictures like Tukaram, Dnyaneswar, Bharat Milap, Tansen, Potana etc. Judging by the way that all these pictures have had long and continuous runs in the big cities, they must have been greatly successful from "box-office" point of view also. This must be an inducement, therefore, to exploit the possibility of similar themes, of which the number is legion. One notices, however, that occasionally pictures with a far different kind of appeal and pandering to the baser instincts of human nature are offered for public entertainment, and bring in quick returns. It is not that the public *want* such pictures: it is rather a case where the producers guess that the public may be induced to want them. Such pictures may pass the scrutiny of censoring boards, but they cannot escape the censure of the more sensitive section of the picture-going public. Picture Houses are fuller than ever now on account of the cheapness of money and Pictures are a powerful instrument for good or evil. A great responsibility therefore rests on the producers to maintain high standards: to be neither tempted nor lead others into temptation with the excuse that that is what the people *want*.

Dagda's Harp

BY JAMES H. COUSINS

(Dagda was the All-Father of the ancient Celtic pantheon. As Sri Krishna played the tune of the Infinite on his flute, so Dagda played on his harp three tunes that induced sorrow, delight and sleep.)

When the Harp of Dagda plays
Down the wood-ways withering;
After summer's vanished swallows
Silence comes, and sorrow follows
On a raven wing,
As the Harp of Dagda plays
Down autumnal ways.

When the Harp of Dagda plays
Where the blazing pine-log cheers;
Festively from roof to rafter
Rises jest and song and laughter:
Laughter after tears,
As the Harp of Dagda plays
Round the festive blaze.

When the Harp of Dagda plays
At the day's long-shadowed close;
Shadows drooping eyes encumber.
Good is toil, but, better, slumber,
Deep, divine repose,
When the Harp of Dagda plays
After weary days.

The Son of Man or the Son of Woman?

BY KUMARA GURU

A German author, a biographical historian, Emil Ludwig, has written the life of Jesus under the heading, *The Son of Man*. An English author, a literary critic, Middleton Murry, has written a work, *The Son of Woman* and also another volume, *The Life of Jesus*. At first thought, it seems paradoxical that one should have styled the male the Son of Man, the other the Son of Woman, as if the son were not of both man and woman.

The "Son of Man" is the reverential biblical name for Jesus, which he himself used, if I recollect aright, for the first time in his saying, "The Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." But Jesus was previously hinted at as the son of God, by the voice from Heaven, after his baptism and before the temptation.

The "Son of Woman" is the name Murry has chosen for delineating D. H. Lawrence's character, and the last sentence of the preface to the reader, lest we should judge Lawrence, reads: "He alone could judge Lawrence, and he also spoke the words, 'Judge not that ye be not judged,'" of course, meaning Jesus.

Why these paradoxical definitions should have risen in the West and not in the East, has led me to ponder over it. The biblical story of Jesus being born of a virgin, by the visitation of the Holy Ghost, is very peculiar, and characteristically *not* the way, which the Hindu mind conceived the *avatars* of God. Even Sri Krishna, the *purna* (full) *avatar*, as he is called, was born of man and woman, for the Hindu considers that God Himself is subject to the natural laws of the Universe, and it was in accordance with nature that the Lord should be born of man and woman.

Like Jesus, it is said that Krishna too exercised after his birth his miraculous powers, which enabled the child to break the jail and be taken across the Jamuna, whose floods were made to subside. It may be that persons interested in the welfare of Vasudeva's children might have given the dope to the sentinels and that the Jamuna's floods subsided by accident.

The legend of the birth of Jesus of a virgin itself proclaims to the East that Christianity has felt, even from its origins, that sex is a sin, as the story in the *Genesis* describes the fall of man from Heaven by the temptation of woman.

These thoughts passed through my mind, because Hilton Brown of *The Punch* (late of the Indian Civil Service), who has known India better than Miss Mayo and persons of that ilk, has said in a private letter, "So much awful rubbish has been written about the sex aspect of Hinduism that we cannot have enough exponents of what I, for one, am quite convinced is the real state of affairs. Give us some more of this....." i.e., "the delineation of the elusive delicate relationship, at once humdrum and sublime, implied in the Hindu marriage."

I, however, just now propose, as a Hindu imbued with somewhat of the Hindu culture, despite western education, to refer to some of the taboos, as the westerner would put it, namely, to some of the rules of the conduct of life of the Hindu, under which normally the human personality of the male is not broken up by fierce conflicts of the soul, as in the case of D. H. Lawrence.

Murry's subject had never been able to resolve his Oedipus complex, i.e., the love of the son for the mother, which has its physical beginnings in the suckling of the babe at the woman's breast. (Sophocles' play of Oedipus the King gave rise to the use of this word). The complex requires sublimation at the adolescent age, when the love is transferred to another woman somewhat younger than the male, who later finds joy in the companionship of marriage. As Murry puts it, in describing the illness of Paul in his sixteenth year, (from *Sons and Lovers*, which is auto-biographical) after quoting the sentence, "He put his head on her breast and took ease of her for love":

"It is terribly poignant, and terribly wrong. Almost better that a boy should die than have such an effort forced upon him by such means. He is called upon to feel in full consciousness for his mother all that a full-grown man might feel for the wife of his bosom."

When I read the Bible, especially *Matthew* and *Mark* of the New Testament, a second time, at the age of thirty, I had doubts that Jesus, though aged over 30 years like Adi Sankara, the World-Preacher of Vedanta, had never known woman --an opinion endorsed also by Ludwig. But Jesus discerned well enough to interpret the lust of flesh in the covetous glance of man at woman, at the synagogue; and his saying, profound with meaning, "Whosoever looketh on woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart," is the dictum needed for the ethics of man's social, nay, spiritual life.

Sankara too passed away from this world of ours, at about the age of thirty-two, quite young like Jesus; and his later story is interesting.

THE SON OF MAN OR THE SON OF WOMAN?

When he met the wife of Mandana Misra, she foils the young ascetic, by discussing, not spiritual love, a part of Vedantic teaching, but the love of a man and woman. He begs a month's time to consider the question; and it is said that he experienced the sex-act by his soul entering the body of a dead king before its cremation, creating the phantasm of the king coming back to life, which the queen detected, and returning to his own physical body some days after. I refer to this story of Sankara mainly with one purpose. The ancient Hindu thinkers, who were adepts in the study of the human mind, have been quite conscious of the Oedipus and Electra complexes, and of the necessity for their sublimation; and that idea is portrayed, for instance, in the mythical episode of Ganesa or Vighnewara, the son of Siva and Parvati. When Ganesa came of age and was pressed to marry, he puts the question, "Find me a woman just like my mother." The story goes on to say that the gods got quite enraged and cursed him with the life of *brahmacharya* (celibacy). Perhaps it is the intention to convey the lesson to the human mind that normally such persons, as are obsessed with the physical love for the mother, should not try the experiment of marriage. This, to my mind, is the lesson that Murry teaches, even though unconsciously, when he portrays what was the tragedy of Lawrence.

I have referred in my book, *Life's Shadows* to the sacredness of the person of man and woman. This is a very important psychic factor in the fondling of the son by the mother, or of the daughter by the father. Such cuddling, hugging and kissing of the child is usually left off in the Hindu household within a couple of years of the birth of the child, both by the father and the mother. It may be that the semi-nakedness of the children in the East, and the lesser clothes which the Hindu children wear do not create the obsession of sex in the maturing Hindu mind. It is typically said of the Hindu that he adores his mother and worships her. It is this adoration of the mother, which does not cause the tragedy I alluded to above. It is a matter of common observation that the daughter is addressed by the Tamil Hindu—not even by her name but as "Ammale," meaning diminutive mother. The word "Amman" also means Iswari. The northern Indian father addresses his daughter as "Devi," which is even more expressive of the feeling of adoration of the girl-child. The Electra complex too is thus sublimated.

While on this subject, it is curious to note that Persian poets sing of the beauty of boys, and not of women, probably on account of the purdah system prevailing in that country, while all Sanskrit poets praise the beauty

of woman. It is apparent how natural and sane life can be without these artificial restrictions laid by man on woman who is not trusted in regard to her chastity.

I must now branch off to certain aspects of the Christian and Hindu religion. I have mentioned the Holy Ghost earlier. It is the third aspect of the Christian Trinity, the first two, being Father and Son. God is the Father; and Christ, the Son (sacrificed as a lamb), stands as the intermediary, to bear the burden of the sins of the whole of humanity, if we believe in him, while the Holy Ghost may be the Spirit of Man. The Bible says to blaspheme or sin against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable, which saying is rather hard to understand.

Be it as it may, I shall first refer to the more common concepts of Trinity in Hindu Religion, which have, by folklore, become part and parcel of the Hindu mind, on an evolutionary basis of the idea, as I imagine it. In the early stages of Hindu civilisation, when nature's forces seemed paramount, Godhead was represented by three names, the Sun (Surya), the Waters (Āpah) and the Earth (Prithvi), without which life could not exist. When, later, it was realised that in human life, nay, in all life, there were the three facts of birth, growth and death, the Hindu personified God Himself taking on three aspects, as Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Siva the Destroyer. It is noteworthy that the three gods are all male. Later still, when it was understood that sex was a universal phenomenon in the whole of creation, these three gods were given wives in the Pantheon, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati respectively. They had sons too, Narada, Manmatha (Cupid) and Ganesa or Kumara (because Ganesa was later ousted by Kumara in worship).

The concept of Siva as Ardha-nariswara (half-man and half-woman) was a great flight of imagination, and it is pertinent to observe that the wives of Brahma and Vishnu were never merged in the *unity* of the cosmic principle. Nay, Vishnu had two wives, as represented in a picture by Ravi Varma. Though Saraswati is the Goddess of Learning, Lakshmi of Prosperity, yet it is Parvati, who is more appealed to as the Mother of the Universe by the mass-mind of South India. For, the Father is indeed an august personage, and the Son seeks the grace of the Father through the intervention of the Mother.

The Vishnu worshipper may say that the aspect of mother is present also in the worship of Lakshmi, typified by the prayer to Sita, when the invocation to Sri Rama did not bear fruit in the alleviation of suffering of

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the devotee Ramadas of Pandharpur. (Sita was not patently conceived as "the Mother" in the *Ramayana* of Valmiki). The Trinity of human relationship here was not complete, as it did not embrace the son-aspect, since Manmatha became *ananga* (disembodied), and Narada, a mere saint in mythic lore.

Having posited Siva as Mahadeva in the act of contemplation, Parvati was invested with the powers of energy of the living Universe and became possessed also of the fearful aspects of Nature, which took shape in the worship of 'Durga', as in Bengal. The Kamakshi temple at Conjeeveram is an instance of a similar worship in South India. Northern India, in the recent past of a thousand years, under the aegis of Mahomedan rule, had come to accept the purdah of the conqueror, which may be a reason why today we are unable to see any temples for worship of Iswari, the consort of Siva, at Benares for instance. When a South Indian visits, for the first time, the Visveswara Temple at Benares next to the huge mosque, he is struck by two important variations in the ritual of worship that he is accustomed to. The devotee himself pours the offering of water over the stone image and offers the *bilva* leaves, without the priest intervening as in South India, and drops the coin for the priest to pick up as the owner of the temple. And there is no Iswari temple where he can pay homage of worship. So the devotee goes to the Visalakshi Temple a little far off, built by a South Indian in recent years, to satisfy his religious need.

Similarly, at the temple at Belur on the banks of the Ganges, beside the temple of Durga with a lolling red tongue, stand next door the images of Radha and Krishna, featuring not as man and wife, but as man and beloved. They convey no meaning at all to the South Indian who visits the home of the late saint Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

I have now to refer to the work of Adi Sankara in South India, where the worship of 'Durga' was transformed into the worship of the graceful and divine, loving Mother. He should also have felt that the Ardhanarishwara ideal alone would lead man to sexual orgies. A Siva temple was erected by the side of every Iswari temple, and at the portals of the Iswari temple was placed at a man's height in a niche the figure of Ganesa, face to face *i. e.*, both looking at each other, the mother at the son and vice versa. If one visits the temple of Jambukeswara at Thiruvanaikaval in the island of Srirangam, one will find the routine of worship there to be thus. First, the visit to the Siva temple where everything is quiet, austere and

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serene. Next to the shrine of Parvati, Akhilandeswari, meaning 'the Mother of the entire Universe.' Instead of blood pouring out of animal sacrifice, we see that *kumkum* (red vermillion) is the offering; and a portion of the offering is returned by the priest to the married woman for her to wear on her forehead as a symbol of chaste motherhood. And on his way back, the worshipper sees Ganesa, offers his prayer and departs.

For the non-Hindu reader, it may be stated that Parvati, Durga, Visalakshi, Kamakshi are different names for Iswari. Similarly, Rudra, Mahadeva, Parameswara, Sankara are the names of Siva. The word 'Siva' means 'the Good'. However, owing to the previous association of that word with the aspect of Destroyer, the mind conceives Him not only as Good, releasing the soul to seek a finer body and brain at re-birth, or from the cycle of births and deaths, but also as the God who infuses the terror of Moral Law in one who does evil. The Hindu mind, in its health, cannot condone the suffering of man brought on himself as a result of his evil deeds against man and society, since the stern law of Karma gives no room for the 'flabby ideas' of Christian forgiveness of evil deeds, and the mockings of the moral law by the materialist.

The projection by the human mind of the idea of man, woman and son, idealised in the human relationship of Father, Mother and Son, finds the most complete Trinity of Godhead in Siva, Parvati and Kumara, and this, possessing a *survival* value, has given the Hindu mind a sanity of the Vision of Life. *

* The earliest sculpture in South India of Somaskanda, i.e., of Siva and Parvati, with Kumara sitting between them, is to be found in cave-temples of the early seventh century. A. D.

The Gardener*

BY A. S. RAMAN

(Translated by the author from his Telugu play.)

Act I

Scene 1—The Palace

King : Have you noticed the change in his face?

Chenna : Yes, my lord, that is a change in his mood.

King : Why does he look so miserable?

Chenna : He sees misery all the way, whenever he goes out.

King : But how can misery frighten a prince?

Chenna : It does not frighten him. It simply stirs his soul.

King : Oh! I remember the prophesy of the sages. Chenna, can't you keep him away from the sight of misery?

Chenna : Where are we to hide misery, when the whole world is filled with it? Grave is the only place free from misery.

King : Chenna, are we to blame for this misery? What's the use of brooding over it? Hereafter let us keep him always indoors. He is a delicate child. His will is too weak to stand the shocks of misery.

Chenna : A delicate child, no doubt. But he is also sensitive. Will it not be worse for such a child to remain always indoors?

King : He is lost to us when he sees misery. That is the prophesy of the sages. How can I afford to lose him, Chenna?

Chenna : How long can we hide him away from the world?

King : He is my only son, and you know what he means to me. Should he be a martyr to the world?

Chenna : Let him see as much of the world as possible. It will strengthen his mind and soften his heart.

King : No, Chenna, let him not go beyond the palace garden.

Chenna : Let us take him round the city. Let him know his future subjects, before he rules them.

King : He has already had a trip round the city. He goes out, and returns with sunken spirits.

Chenna : But he is so restless in the palace. Let him go out, and breathe freely.

* DEDICATED to JAMES H. COUSINS.

King : Chenna, see that he enjoys this trip, at least. Let the city be well-decorated, so that it presents a grand spectacle of unalloyed happiness.

Chenna : Misery does not actually appear before his eyes. He simply sees it everywhere. Something must be wrong with his eyes.

Scene 2—Palace garden: Yasodhara and Siddhartha

Siddhartha : The sky looks empty.

Yasodhara : And the sun is dull, like a philosopher suddenly conscious of his vague pursuits.

Siddhartha : Oh! I am poor.

Yasodhara : You are a prince.

Siddhartha : No earthly riches can content me. Are those not rubies lying strewn over a green carpet yonder? Let me go and gather them.

Yasodhara : No. They are the rays of the setting sun. Don't you see them slowly fading away? They will settle high above in the sky as stars. Why do you run after them, trampling down flowers on the way?

Siddhartha : Oh! I am thirsty.

Yasodhara : Don't you hear the ripples of the streamlet flowing at your feet?

Siddhartha : No earthly water can quench my thirst. I see clouds descending to earth. Let me drink their water, before it falls on the dust.

Yasodhara : They are rocky hills without a drop of water in them.

Siddhartha : I am tired.

Yasodhara : Let us go back to the palace.

Siddhartha : No earthly home can cheer me up. Oh! What are those vultures of clouds hovering round my eyes?

Yasodhara : No. They are a swarm of bees buzzing over your forehead. Oh! What beautiful locks of hair! (*starts up*)

Siddhartha : Why do you shudder like that? Yasodhara, don't be frightened.

Yasodhara : You are talking in a weird tone to-day. How can I remain calm?

Siddhartha : I am sick of the world in which I live. Can't I see the world which lives in me?

Yasodhara : Oh! Don't expose the hollowness of my dream, my lord.

Siddhartha : What dream?

THE GARDENER

Yasodhara : It was a lake in the sky. There was a winged white elephant plucking lotus flowers, and throwing them at the moon, who was patiently weaving them into a wreath. The clouds seemed slowly coming down to the earth. After some time, I found myself flying, seated on the wings of lightning. I was dropped at the feet of the moon. The moon smiled and said, "The garland is ready. Let me put it round your neck." I smiled, shivering. The moon kissed me, and I blushed. The clouds groaned, the elephant danced in the air, the lake rippled—perhaps that was their way of rejoicing. But I stood with my head bent down. There were smiles only in my heart.....Oh ! What a sweet dream ! Will it come true ?

(Enter Chenna)

Siddhartha : Is the chariot ready ?

(An owl hoots)

Chenna : Yes, my lord.

Siddhartha : Let us go.

Yasodhara : Don't start now.

Siddhartha : Why not ?

Yasodhara : Don't you hear the hooting of the owl ?

Siddhartha : I also hear the beatings of my restless heart.

Yasodhara : Where are you off to ? For a hunting ?

Siddhartha : No. For haunting.

Yasodhara : Whom ?

Siddhartha : Human hearts.

Yasodhara : What does he mean, Chenna ?

Chenna : The prince visits the city in state.

Siddhartha : No. Siddartha plunges into the world.

Yasodhara : Why does he seem so upset today ?

(A flower is struggling against a worm by closing its petals)

Siddhartha : (frantically) Oh ! Chenna, some worm is eating away that flower. Can't you drive it out ?

Chenna : Flowers are its only food. How can I starve it to death ?

Siddhartha : Worms prey on flowers ! From tomorrow there shall be no flowers in my garden. I cannot see their tears.

Chenna : Then, this ceases to be a garden.

Siddhartha : Yes. It will no longer be a graveyard of flowers. Chenna, where am I going now ?

Chenna : Into the city in State.

Siddhartha : Is it your command ?

The TRIVENI Quarterly

Chenna : No, my lord, it is your own command. And I have had the chariot made ready.

Siddhartha : How can I go and leave the flowers exposed to the worms ?

Yasodhara : The gardener will look to it.

Siddhartha : The prince is the best gardener in the world.

Yasodhara : What am I, then ?

Siddhartha : The source of his smiles and tears. .

(Exit *Siddhartha* with *Chenna* ; *Yasodhara* goes to the flower which is harassed by the worm)

Scene 3—Siddhartha emerges from the bed-chamber

Voice of silence : You are going to desert your wife ?

Siddhartha : Who says ?

Voice of silence : You don't hear your own voice !

Siddhartha : I am not deserting her. I am just removing illusions from her mind. Let me make her life surer and safer.

Voice of silence : You don't love her ? But she loves you, she lives for you. You spurn such a simple soul, you monster !

Siddhartha : If it is her soul that loves me, I am not spurning her. I am simply extricating her from the morass of passion. I do love her. Otherwise why should I leave her now ? Do you understand ? No. You can never understand that idea. Am I a monster ?

Voice of silence : Why not strangle that baby instead of ushering him into the world without a father ?

Siddhartha : Yes. He is my son, and he will inherit the legacy that I shall leave behind.

Voice of silence : What legacy can you leave behind, you who are renouncing the world ?

Siddhartha : Love of life, love of humanity. That shall be my legacy. Can I not earn it, if I renounce the world ?

Voice of silence : You are a dupe, mope, you shall be damned. That is our curse.

Siddhartha : Curse ! Can it undo the blessings of my conscience ? So let there be a struggle between these two voices, the voice of my conscience, and your voice, the voice that I now hear from somewhere. No more babble, I am deaf..... .

THE GARDENER

Scene 4—Morning: A banyan tree on the banks of the Anoma: Siddhartha, in saffron robes, stands staring at the ripples of the river. Chenna kneels before him; Kanthaka, the horse, looks into the heavens and cries out all on a sudden.

Chenna: Whither, my lord?

Siddhartha: Out on a pilgrimage.

Chenna: Like a cuckoo in spring-time?

Siddhartha: No, like one freed from the shackles of society.

Chenna: The bird may fly in air. But it cannot exist without a nest.

Siddhartha: If the nest degenerates into a cage? Chenna, what do you see in my look?

Chenna: Glow, as usual.

Siddhartha: Not gloom? And in my eyes?

Chenna: Tears.

Siddhartha: Yes, tears of blood shed at the fate of man.

Chenna: You are offered a cup of nectar. Why not drink it to the lees? Don't throw it away. Open your eyes.

Siddhartha: What do you mean? Have I not opened my eyes? Otherwise I would not have broken through this thick cloud of night.

Chenna: You have no eyes.

Siddhartha: I am not blind.

Chenna: Your heart is blind. It did not throb, when you hurled my innocent mother into the abyss of agony.

Siddhartha: Blind man!

Chenna: I see the curve of the wave, and the curl of the cloud. I hear the mute thoughts of the cuckoo: I feel the thrill of experience. How can you call me blind?

Siddhartha: You may see the smiles of the heart. But can you hear its cries? You may enjoy the moonlight of the face. But can you relish its darkness? And this is sight, is it?

Chenna: What is beauty for? Is it only to be left unenjoyed? Is it not for pleasing man that those flowers blossom?

Siddhartha: You gaze at the beauty of petals. Look there! The rustling foliage of yesterday is today lost in the dust. That yonder tree which once spread its shade over the limbs of many a wearied traveller droops now, yielding to its destiny. The fresh flower falls at the fateful touch of the gale, the gorgeous tints of the rainbow fade away into the white of the sun, the winged fairy of lightning flickers, and in a twinkling, flies into the void. And these illusions are the basis of your experience! It's getting late for me.

Chenna : Let us travel together.

Siddhartha : You cannot keep pace with me.

Chenna : Why not ?

Siddhartha : You will complain that the path is full of thorns.

Chenna : There is Kanthaka to take us even round the world.

Siddhartha : Chenna, are we better than the animal ? Are we not overridden by society ?

Chenna : Why should man waste his short span of life in privations ?

My lord, every step of your tired feet on these silvan paths of merciless pebbles breaks my heart. Asceticism is no bed of roses, and pain is not for such as you.

Siddhartha : I can never return to this world of misery. Let me bow to the god in man, and die in peace. Don't stand in my way !

Oh ! You are weeping. What is the matter ? Don't be a coward. Human life must end as a lyric. That is my mission.

(Slowly moves like a sweet dream at day-break; Chenna stands aghast; the river grows wild: it seems to ask him: WHITHER ? WHITHER ? He looks up, and the sky is clear, like the answer :PEACE ! PEACE !)

Scene 5—Yasodhara is pacing up and down the balcony over-looking the streets, her eyes are dull and her face is shrivelled up with wrinkles; she looks like her own ghost; Rahula is crying in the bed-chamber.

(Enter Chenna)

Chenna : Tears cannot remove grief.

Yasodhara : Oh ! Chenna ! You have been away for a long time. Am I really weeping ?

Chenna : I see tears in your eyes. You look ghastly today.

Yasodhara : Can't you dissuade your prince from hunting dumb animals ?

Chenna : He has never been a hunter.

Yasodhara : What is he now ?

Chenna : He is no longer a prince to be a hunter.

Yasodhara : *(frightened)* What do you mean ? Has he abandoned me ?

Chenna : Do you feel forlorn, when he ceases to be a prince ? Can't you follow him by ceasing to be a princess ?

Yasodhara : I am not able to understand you.

Chenna : He is out on a campaign.

Yasodhara : Where is his army ? Can he fight alone ?

Chenna : Alone ? No. The whole man is with him.

Yasodhara : Who is his enemy, then ?

Chenna : Living. And life is his friend.

Yasodhara : Where has he gone now ?

THE GARDENER

Chenna : He has flung himself into the world in search of life.

Yasodhara : Chenna, what were his parting words ?

Chenna : He said that he was determined to be away from your heart and mind.

Yasodhara : Does he not return to us ?

Chenna : Not as husband or prince.

Yasodhara : Rahula is crying for him.

(*An old man is seen tumbling into a ditch by the roadside*)

Ah ! Chenna, what is that ?

Chenna : That is old age.

Yasodhara : But the King does not look so worn out ! He too is very old.

Chenna : Kings can afford to postpone old age.

Yasodhara : I shall also be so helpless one day ?

Chenna : Senility is inevitable.

Yasodhara : Even your prince cannot evade it ?

Chenna : Life dare not defy time.

Yasodhara : No. Life is all powerful.

(*A corpse is seen being carried in a bier*)

Chenna : That is death ; don't be frightened. So you see how powerful life is ! The corpse will be burnt to ashes, and there ends the misery of life.

Yasodhara : Is death also inevitable ?

Chenna : Yes, fortunately. It is the only cure for life, which is all disease. Still man clings to life to the last, in spite of decay and decrepitude.

Yasodhara : How I wish I were dead !

Chenna : The mother must not speak like that. The child is there to make her life worth living.

Yasodhara : But how long will that life last ?

Chenna : That is eternal.

Yasodhara : Does it not die with the child ?

Chenna : The child may die. But the memory it leaves behind lives for ever. It is the source of that eternal joy.

Yasodhara : I feel miserable.

(*Rahula's sobbing is heard*)

Chenna : You are a mother. Live for your child. We have seen enough of the world within a few moments. Let us console Rahula.

Yasodhara : He is crying for his father. How can we console him ?

Chenna : You can't see more of the world, Devi. Just retire to your dreamland, the palace.

Yasodhara : Chenna, let me build my palace in the midst of withering flowers and dry leaves.

Chenna : Let them turn fresh and green at your touch.

Yasodhara : But have I the freedom to build my own palace ?

Chenna : Freedom is there, always in us. We have only to feel it.

Scene 6—On the bank of a river

(Rahula and Champa)

Rahula : This is the King and that is the Queen. They used to remain on the river throughout the day, and return to the palace at night. But now they are homeless. The King kneels down before Rahula and says : "Once I had a grand palace here. But it crumbled to dust during an earthquake. And with it all our glory is gone, except the claim that we are King and Queen. We hear that you are a great builder. Can't you build a small home for these royal refugees ? We are helpless, sire." Moved by their tale of woe, Rahula promises to help them, and Champa also does her bit of good.

Champa : She does not.

Rahula : Don't be silly. Walls I can raise. But roof shall be entirely your work.

Champa : Why build a house and leave it to the tide ? This is not the place for house-building.

Rahula : Tide ! Where is the sea to threaten us with a tide ?

Champa : Children cannot tell a river from a sea.

Rahula : Do what I say. Go and gather dry leaves. Then weave them into a roof. Make haste, don't waste time.

Champa : No. I can't play this game. It is dangerous.

Rahula : Dangerous ? Why ?

Champa : If the tide sweeps you and your house away into realms beyond my reach ?

Rahula : Why are you so afraid of the tide ? You girls are always timid. You are not fit for any game.

Champa : We girls can play only with toys, not with tides.

Rahula : But our river can never be in flood.

Champa : Yes, go ahead. Prepare tiny boats with lotus leaves, and set them afloat, with your King and Queen in it.

Rahula : Don't try to be clever. Mind your business..... Is the roof ready ?

THE GARDENER

(Enter Yasodhara)

(in ecstasy) Mother! Mother! We are building houses for Kings and Queens.

Yasodhara : Rahul, who is this girl?

Champa : I myself don't know who I am.

Rahula : Usually I meet her at the palace-gate.

Champa : Perhaps I am a beggar girl.

Rahula : When I saw her first, she said that she was hungry. I gave her food and asked her to be my play-mate.

Champa : Yes, we always play in the garden, building worlds and pulling them down.

Yasodhara : Who are your parents, my child?

Champa : I have no particular parents. So I find them everywhere.

Yasodhara : Where do you live?

Champa : I have no particular home. So I claim the whole world as my home.

Rahula : Mother, she always talks about big things.

Champa : Yes, with all the courage that poverty gives me.

Yasodhara : Champa, let me be also your mother. From today you will live with me, as Rahul's sister.

Rahula : Mother, she is already my sister. I cannot leave her. Let us take her home.

Champa : I don't know how to live in palaces!

Yasodhara : You may live as you like, for our home is no longer a palace. Let us make it as simple and sublime as a temple.

Act II

Scene 1—Midnight : Palace—The King's Bed-chamber

Chenna : The chariot is ready, your Majesty.

King : Yes, your chariot is always ready. Chenna, why do you break in so rudely? My dream is disturbed.

Chenna : Excuse me, your Majesty. I feared that we might be too late.

King : Too late! What do you mean? You go out for a hunting at midnight?

Chenna : I have planned a pilgrimage for your Majesty.

King : Who is 'your Majesty'? Don't you know that I am no longer a king? Chenna, I cannot cling to the throne, when I have none to leave it behind to. Let me be myself, a father living for his lost son.

Chenna : We have not lost him, my lord. He is with us now. We have only lost claims on him. But we may look at him.

King : Look at him ! Where ? Don't rouse in me hopes which you can never fulfil. (*dreamily*) Ah ! My child ! Don't you hear your name in the beatings of my heart ? Don't you see the dreams haunting my life ? Why not return to me, my darling ?

• Your heaven lies in my arms, not in the void behind the skies.

Chenna : We are going to see him now. He is staying in Anandvan with his disciples. The whole city has been flocking round him since the evening. Those who have seen him say that they have seen God in flesh and blood.

King : Is that so ? Will he recognise me ? Or, will he tear himself away from my embrace, Chenna ? Will he not see his own image in my eyes ?

Chenna : Let us make haste : the chariot also is ready.

King : Chariot ! What for ? I must walk all the way. Otherwise where are the charms of pilgrimage. Let us go.

Scene 2—Palace-Garden

Wayfarer : Are you the gardener here ?

Gardener : Yes, sir. And you ?

Wayfarer : Just a wayfarer.

Gardener : And this girl ?

Wayfarer : Another wayfarer: Champa, by name.

Gardener : Your daughter ?

Wayfarer : No. We are just travelling together : that's all. Don't fear : we won't demand your hospitality and expose you to the fury of your master.

Gardener : Are you not afraid of night ?

Wayfarer : Are there no glow-worms twinkling along our path ? When there is light, night cannot do anything. But, poor man, you are drudging even now ! You keep on watering the plants, till they are smothered, eh ?

Gardener : The garden must bloom with flowers, before dawn. My master will be visiting here with some great man, who, they say, is a god dropped from heavens. Oh ! What huge crowds he is drawing ! I too want to join them. But I dare not defy my master by deserting the garden.

Wayfarer : What can you do, if you happen to go there ?

Gardener : What can any one do, if God descends to earth ? One will pray for peace and plenty.

Champa : Brother, let us go, it is getting late.

Gardener : Where to ?

THE GARDENER

Wayfarer : She is chasing a child who is running towards that great man.

Gardener : Oh, children are running towards him ! What is his special charm, sir ? Music ? Magic ? What ?

Wayfarer : Memories of a life. Brother, do you come or not ?

Gardener : I simply cannot understand such gripping memories. She might have once loved him, dreamt of him, wept for him, and now that he is within her reach, she is running towards him. But who knows, he may recede, as she proceeds.

Champa : I am not running towards your great man, sir. Don't tease me. I am only searching for my play-mate. He has left the game unfinished.

Gardener : But they say that he is too big for children to play with.

Champa : Oh ! you are lost in thinking of that great man. Brother, let us go.

Wayfarer : That does not matter, my dear old man. She will make him small. Is she not a child ?

Champa : He is also a child. He runs away with my toys ! I will teach him a lesson. Come on, don't waste time here.

Wayfarer : But don't miss that great man. You know who he is ? He is the son of your own master.

Gardener : The King is my master.

Wayfarer : And that great man is his son.

Gardener : You mean, Prince Siddhartha ? Is he alive ? Has he returned ? Oh ; How can I miss him ? Let us go.

Scene 3—On the Road

Rahula : Mother, why are we groping in the dark ?

Yasodhara : Don't fear, we have not lost our way.

Rahula : Where are we going now ?

Yasodhara : To the garden.

Rahula : To the garden in the dead of night ! Are you mad ?

Yasodhara : Flowers that droop to dust to-day will wither away tomorrow.

Rahula : So what ? Are you going to gather flowers now ?

Yasodhara : Gods love only flowers picked up from dust. Rahul, never, pluck flowers. We are going for *puja* now.

Rahula : Are there temples in gardens ?

Yasodhara : Gardens themselves are temples. Rahul, you will see God now. Don't be in a hurry.

Rahula : What is the use of seeing gods that are as hard and firm as the stone walls to which they are confined ?

Yasodhara : But our God does walk, talk, weep, laugh, just like you and me.

Rahula : Really ? Then I must see him. Mother, does he also look like you and me ? I mean, with no extra eyes and limbs ?

Yasodhara : He will be exactly like us.

(Kisses him on the forehead)

Rahula : But how can I walk all the way ? Let me go and bring my horse.

Yasodhara : Sit on my shoulders, if you are tired.

Rahula : No. You would stumble in the dark. Mother, where is that garden ? Have I ever seen it ?

Yasodhara : No. But it is very near, though rather out of the way.

Rahula : I cannot trudge on like this. Mother, don't insist on *puja* now. Let us go home. Champa will be cursing me. I have promised to play with her after dinner.

Yasodhara : Rahul, do you leave your mother alone in the dark ? You are the only light along her way.

Rahula : Oh ! mother ! Don't weep. Let us go on.

Yasodhara : My darling ! *(hugs him)*

Rahula : Where are all the stars tonight ?

Yasodhara : Perhaps they are all hiding in your little heart.

(gleams of light and chorus of voices at a distance)

Rahula : *(starts up)* Oh ! Where does that tumult come from ? Let us run away. *(Clings to his mother)* Oh ! Ghosts !

Yasodhara : They will all fly away.

Rahula : Ghosts, mother ?

Yasodhara : Where ?

Rahula : There !

Yasodhara : I see none. Don't fear. Am I not with you ?

Rahula : Mother ! Mother ! Don't you hear that sound ?

Yasodhara : Yes. I hear a rhythm of foot-steps, and a cadence of song.

(Enter Champa, Wayfarer and Gardener)

Champa : You are here ! How tired I am in trying to find you ! When I went to the garden, in search of you, I saw nothing but the dry leaves rustling in the dust and the ghost of a gardener watering withering plants. And in the palace, instead of a rush and roar of life, I felt the silence and solitude of a grave. What are you running after so selfishly in this darkness ? Rahul, why do you leave a game unfinished ?

Yasodhara : Champa, let him seek God here.

Champa : God ! Does he mean, toys and sweets ? Come with me, Rahul, I will show you any number of gods.

THE GARDENER

Rahula : Where are they ?

Champa : You will see them, as you go on playing.

(Enter *Gautama* with *bhikkus*)

Yasodhara : Rahula, here is your God. Bow to Him.

(*Rahula bows to Gautama*)

Yasodhara : (prostrating herself) My life is dedicated to you, my lord.

The lotus does not know her own birth-place. But when she turns round, she finds herself smeared with mud. She blushes with shame. Once the sun smiles at her, she begins to dance in joy, till her petals droop to dust, leaving behind only traces of the heart. That she offers him.

(Enter the King and Chenna)

King : Oh my son ! Forgive me my love !

Gauthama : Love those that I love, the afflicted humanity. *Yasodhara*, how are those flowers in your garden ?

Yasodhara : They are free from worms, my lord.

Gauthama : You have killed the worms ?

Yasodhara : No. I have taught them to live on fruits.

Gauthama : *Yasodhara*, go and be a gardener. But don't try to nourish plants with tears. *Rahul*, always play a game to the finish. And play it in a garden where you have light and shade. Chenna, drive on your chariot, till you reach the milky way...

(Exit with *bhikkus*)

King : *Yasodhara*, I see smiles in your eyes.

Yasodhara : Yes, father, they are the offspring of a full heart.

Champa : *Rahul*, what game shall we play ? Did you not hear God ?

(*Rahula is playing with the parrots and peacocks, designed on the border of Yasodhara's sari*).

The Immortal Song

BELLAMKONDA SEETARAM

(Rendered from 'Jarini Gitalu' prabandha by 'Gandharva' * in Telugu)

On a bright moon-lit night,
In the garden,
At the feet of my Lord,
I am singing the Song of Love
On the Veena of Union!

....

Death has come
To take me away!
Death stepped into the garden!

....

Death heard my song,
The Love-offering to the ear of Lord,
My song, 'the love of Lord's ears'
Death heard my song of Eternal Love!

....

Death went back
Singing the same Song of mine!
Death went back!

* 'Gandharva' is the pen-name of Mr. B. Ramadas, a well-known young poet of Andhra Desa. The poet's Prabandha, *Jarini Geetalu* is a collection of his songs sung in praise of Radha-Krishna love. The poet is the present president of the 'Navya Kala Parishat' a large organisation of young Andhra poets, actors, musicians, painters and dancers.

The New Way

BY D. RAGHUTHAMACHARYA

To the person that steps aside from the current of life and gazes for a while upon the swift-flowing stream sitting on the bank, it is clear that man cannot go any further along the age-old way. The old way is the one that has led to the peaks of modern civilisation with its crowded city life, its marvellous inventions, the comfort and swiftness of travel, its art and music, its empires, democracies and dictators—all culminating in the present War. This War is the logical outcome of the old way.

The old way is the one of educating man to cultivate and encourage national or mass consciousness. Democracy and Dictatorship are alike in their insistence on the sacrifice of the individual for the mass, call it Nation or Humanity. It is true that identification of one's self with those of others is necessary for the growth of harmony in human relations and for the avoidance of petty rivalry and jealousy. All the religions of the world have insisted on this enlargement of the self.

But centuries have not helped to lead man to the desired result for, in a way, it is neither possible nor right nor natural. Hence its failure.

It has failed because it forgot that individual man, after all, was the object of even that enlargement, that mass consciousness was necessary for the harmonious expression and fulfilment of the individual, that mass life was only a means and a method for the achievement of individual purpose. It is forgetting the end for the means.

Naturally speaking, what matters most to the individual is himself. But democracy taught him to value society higher just in order to get the fulfilment of the individual purpose. In the practice of that mutual adjustment he soon forgot the aim, and the means soon became the end. Self-sacrifice or effacement, in whatever field, became a virtue and a mark of civilisation, the worship of the abstract mass, or Nation or Humanity, the highest perfection. The focus of interest was shifted from the man to the abstract concept of Nation or Humanity and the process of dehumanisation began. He soon knew himself as a screw or a nut in the giant machine of society and his thought, emotion and action became adjusted to the changed focus of interest.

This civilisation with its deification of the abstract so belittled the significance of Man that it frustrated its own cherished aim. This is a case of losing the trees for the wood.

This, again, is the direct outcome of the enormous industrialisation of science, which is primarily a discovery of the true nature of life and man. The enormity of industrial product so impressed him that he forgot he was the creator of it, that his compact smallness was more precious and dynamic than the hugeness he had created. The individual became despicable and only fit to live as a devotee and a fawning courtier of the lifeless rulership of the State. To assert individuality was a crime and must be obliterated. Men must be non-descript, mentally and spiritually, as, perhaps, even physically, and only mechanically useful. There is no wonder that man's sense of horror at the happenings of the day is conspicuous by its absence. Where individuality is no more, moral life or excellences find no support. We are a world of automatic toys propelled by mass impulses. If this process were to continue, the globe would cease to contain human individuals. It will be a world of impersonal automatons of flesh and blood with only a group-mind, like the bees or sheep. Was this the end that civilisation did or should contemplate?

Individuality, or the special characteristic and genius of each man is the pivot of life. Civilisation and authority of State must help to bring out that special faculty which gives each man his pride and dignity in social life.

The mass consciousness which has been artificially fostered thirsts only for power, possession and animal predominance. For its nature is animal. The distinctness of the individual is his pattern of spirit, the mould into which the animal is poured. Bereft of the pattern all life is one in its material and animal substance. The emphasis must be shifted from the substance to the pattern, for the grace and unrivalled nuances of contour are the true individual, not the stuff that is common to all life.

The State, supporting itself on the concept of the Universal, grew out of the need to protect and develop the particular, the individual citizen. But soon in social life, as in metaphysics, the beginning forgot the end.

The deification of the concept of the Universal is at the bottom of all mischief. Let us, therefore, return to the respect for the particular, for therein will we find our harmony with Nature. Let us note with what care and tenacity Nature preserves and perpetuates her patterns but for which

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we should have no awareness of life in its monotony of shapeless stuff. Nay, the stuff without its name and form (particular pattern) is inconceivable. It is the pattern that gives life its reality and even its substance.

The State based on the concept of the Universal, in trying to treat all men alike, has failed to treat any man properly. Civilisation with its eye on the general has been blind to the particular, which is the only real.

The fact is that life revels in the creation of the Individual and the world drama of cosmic life is directed to that end. Despite man's misdirected effort, history is a record of the triumph of the Individual. Where men have tried most to obliterate the difference between them, the difference has asserted itself with a vengeance as in the states of communism and socialism. Tremendously dynamic individuals have sprung up like the bursting lava of volcanoes that have lain long chained up in the womb of the earth. In the realms of differentiation, where the individual has more or less greater chances of expression, there is no upheaval, no volcanic eruption of personality, for Nature has no artificial shackles to burst.

A metaphysic and theory of State based on this truth of the eternal verity and beauty of the Individual can alone help the laying out of true civilisation. The Universal is a common factor, like the animal in man, and the atomic structure of matter, and needs neither attention nor the effort of statement.

The purpose and crowning grace of life is individuality ; and true civilisation is that which helps its growth and perfection. The remembering of the basic unity or universality is only as a corrective to the clash of interests and tastes and tendencies concomitant with the individual, but never as an abrogation of it.

Here is the basic principle that should be enlarged upon, in practical detail, by the philosopher of Spirit as well as State to construct a new civilisation or resuscitate an old and lost one, as the case may be. Only its basis and aim must be the preserving and perfection of the individual, which is the really spiritual truth of man. The new way is more often the old way trodden anew.

The Literature of Orissa*

BY V. V. PRASAD

Orissa is, as the late Dr. C. F. Andrews remarked, the Cinderella of Provinces. Orissa is beautiful country, but poor. She has a beautiful literature, but most of it is in manuscript, for book-publishing is a hazardous undertaking in such poor surroundings. The language spoken in Orissa—Oriya—is a beautiful language too: it is very closely allied to Bengali and sounds masculine. Indeed, the Oriyas say that Bengali is corrupt Oriya, while the Bengalis say that Oriya is corrupt Bengali. This idea of a corrupt language appears to be silly to us linguists, who are reminded of the remarks of the sixteenth-century writer, Sir Thomas Elyot, author of *Gouvernour*—in which he deprecates the influence of “nourishes and othere folissh women,” who, he alleges, corrupt the pronunciation of young children put under their care.

In the more cultivated sections, especially in Northern Orissa, Oriya is already beginning to be spoken very much with the sounds of Bengali; and if their influence should persist, ere long the two languages would become one. Personally, I welcome such a coalescence: but I do not wish to raise a controversy about it right here.

* * * * *

The outstanding contribution of Orissa to the literature of India—and, indeed, to the literature of the world—is Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda*. Jayadeva is the last great name in Sanskrit poetry. The legend has it that Krishna himself aided Jayadeva in the description of Radha's beauty when his mortal powers proved inadequate. Goethe has praised the *Gitagovinda* along with Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* and *Meghaduta*. The form of the poem is strikingly original. Jones calls it a little pastoral drama; Lassen refers to it as a lyric drama; and von Schroeder styles it a “refined *yatra*”.

Jayadeva's poem is not a mere *sravya-kavya*: it is a daring piece of originality. Jayadeva knew beforehand that his work would be recited in temples and at festivals. He asks to think of the piece as being performed before the mind's eye. To this end he uses narrative, recitative, description and song so skilfully that there remains not a trace of monotony anywhere.

* Talk broadcast by All India Radio Madras, in the University series “India's Literatures” on 25th July 1943. Slight alterations have since been made by the writer. By courtesy of A. I. R. Madras.

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Jayadeva has produced a masterpiece. In so far as it presents a single total impression it surpasses any other poem in this world. This is an example of beauty, which, as Aristotle says, springs from magnitude and arrangement. The songs are perfect metrically and display the sheer beauty of words of which Sanskrit alone is capable. As Berriedale Keith has observed :

"There can be no doubt that in their wider range of interests in which love plays a part, important indeed, but not paramount in human affairs, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripedes can attain in their choruses effects more appealing to our minds than Jayadeva, but their medium is not capable of producing so complete a harmony of sound and sense. In the case of *Gitagovinda* the art of wedding sound and meaning is carried out with such success that it cannot fail to be appreciated even by ears far less sensitive than those of Indian writers on poetics. The result, however, of this achievement is to render any translation useless as a substitute for the original: if to be untranslatable is a proof of the attainment of the highest poetry, Jayadeva has certainly claim to that rank."

That is the great constitutional lawyer speaking in his capacity as Regius Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Edinburgh.

Bertrand Russell has said somewhere that Buddhism appeared to him to be a religion only for princes. Buddhism was preached in Orissa by Asoka after the Kalinga War, and spread to the people through the princes. As a result of this, Pali became a popular language in these parts, which blended with the Dravidian language then spoken in Orissa and gave rise to the language "Odro," of which Bharata Muni, the authority on *Natyasastra*, speaks as being the language of the "Odros" and the Savaras. This "Odro" has become the Oriya of today, and is still referred to by the old name in the Telugu country.

Oriya literature may be said to have begun in the 12th century A.D., and was manned mostly by princes. Out of seventy men of letters listed in Mr. Bonomali Misro's *Odisa Sahityoro Itihaso* seventeen are princes, most of whom belong to the Bhonjo family. Upendro Bhonjo, the greatest among them all, was also the most prolific. He lived in the 18th century, which is known as the Upendro Age or the Kavya Age. His style shows that he was learned in the Sastras. He is full of figures of speech and of Sanskrit phrases. Twenty of his works have been so far published, and there are at least twenty more which are yet to be published.

One of the highlights in the literature of Orissa is known as the *Koyili*. In Markondo Das's *Kesobo Koyili*, Yasoda expresses in

straightforward verse replete with *karunarasa* her grief at the departure of Krishna to Mathura in an address to a *koyili* or a cuckoo. Some familiar everyday incidents, such as the calling of "Uncle Moon" by children are skilfully woven into this poem :

Nisakale horimage chando
Noyonoteki aw thanku rauththan thi nondo.

Yasoda begins her first verse with *ka*, the second with *kha*, the third with *ga*, and so on until *ksha*. This convention of *Koyili*, which is made use of again and again in Oriya literature is evidently borrowed from Sanskrit works like *Megha-Duta* and *Hamsa-Duta*, but nowhere else in Indian literature does this convention seem to have been adopted; and with such consummate skill. The *Koyili* convention in Oriya literature has been as successful as the Pastoral Convention in the West.

There are other works of intrinsic worth, such as Dinakrishna Das's *Rosokollolo*, Upendro Bhonjo's *Kalponik Kabyos*, *Subhodra Porinoyo*, and *Kola-koutuko* and Jadumoni's *Raghobo Bilaso*: but what seems to have been stressed in them all is the verbal dexterity of the poets which bore testimony to their scholarliness. There are whole volumes written without the use of any vowel except the short *a*, known as *abona*. Similarly, literary gymnastics known as *antarlipi*, *bohirlipi*, *srinkhola*, etc., are frequently resorted to by the leisured princes in order to sharpen their wits. (People from other communities were all too poor to afford to indulge in literary pursuits, and the brahmins who had the necessary time and leisure, preferred to dabble in Sanskrit literature with questionable results, and looked down upon native Oriya. Until a hundred years ago, therefore, the Oriya princes were the trustees of Oriya literature.) The word *srinkhola* indicates that the words or letters in the verse are arranged in a chain, being connected to each other by alliterative links. In a simple *srinkhola* the last letter or word of the first line of the verse becomes the initial letter or word of the second line, and so on: and thus all the lines of a piece are linked together. In a compound *srinkhola* the arrangement is more complicated.

In the land of Utkal, religion influenced literature a good deal. First, Buddhism and then Vaishnavism—especially through Chaitanya's Bhakti cult—found many adherents in this Province. A writer called Salobeko, a Muslim, was a worshipper of Vishnu and wrote some Oriya poetry in the seventeenth century. On account of the religious fervour at the time, many Sanskrit works were translated in the 16th and 17th centuries,

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and, as such, this period is known as the Translation Age. *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata*, and the eighteen puranas were among the works translated at this time. A Telugu writer called Gopala translated the *Adhyatma Ramayana* into Oriya, making judicious omissions here and there.

There is a sprinkling of women writers in the literature of Orissa, and one of them is a royal princess. Brindavati Dasi, who lived in the 17th century, wrote *Purnotomo Chandrodoyo*, under the influence of Chaitanya's cult and was therefore full of the devotional spirit. Her son, Bhimo Das and grandson, Kripasindhu Das, are prominent among the litterateurs of Orissa.

Nissankoraya Rani, a princess, had an unhappy married life, and returned to her parents. She then wrote *Padmavati Abhilasho*—which, alas, has not yet been published. Her description of the spring season as a bride to whom the trees are giving welcome with their *toranam* branches and fresh flowers is said to be unique in all literature:

Kusumosomoyo Hoyichchi udoyo
Pollobito torulota
Brikshe daledalo Lagino goholo
Bibhaki borobonita!
Sorbo torugono Borojatipono
Koronti bibhasombharo,
Borokonyanku ki Joutuko debe
Bodhayi ochchonti koro.

Does she not remind you of that poetical daughter of Aurungzeb who spent her life in solitary confinement?

A poet named Bhimo Bhoysi flourished in the nineteenth century, and contributed in no small measure to Orissa's literature. He was a savara, member of a hill-tribe and had become blind in his boyhood. He was an Alekha and had several followers, some of them learned brahmins. His disciples used to note down his inspired poetry which flowed from his heart like a spring. He was essentially a preacher, and had planned an attack on the Jagannath Temple at Puri, which proved abortive. He believed in the harmony of the Universe and felt it through contemplation. He spoke of a "Life Force," in the manner of a Samuel Butler.

In the Radhanath Age, or the modern Age, i.e. after 1850, prose began to be written for the first time in Oriya literature. Most of the modern Oriya poets (and poetasters) are Nature-worshippers. Radhanath Roy, who is the national poet of Orissa, was the first to write Nature poetry

in Oriya. Orissa paid Radhanath the greatest tribute of which she is capable by bringing out an edition of his complete works.

Madhusudan Rao was a Maharashtrian who lived in Orissa. His guide, philosopher and friend was Radhanath: and out of this close association of the Bengali and the Maharashtrian, much good came to Oriya literature. Like Radhanath he was a schoolmaster and did much to provide suitable text-books for schools in Orissa. It is a favourite saying of Bernard Shaw's that a man writes a text-book because he is incapable of writing any other kind of book. Oriya text-books are an exception to this: they are literature, for they have been written by men of genius like Radhanath and Madhusudan.

Along with Phakir Mohan Senapati, Radhanath and Madhusudan form the trinity of modern Oriya literature. Phakir Mohan also wrote text-books; and if he has not left bulky volumes to posterity, † it might well be said of him that he was a practitioner of the highest form of literature,—journalism. His occasional essays and poems appeared in various journals in the Province from time to time.

Quite a number of young writers have made their appearance in recent years in the firmament of Oriya letters. They are moving with the times. One of them, Sochi Raut Roy, has been translated into English by a well-known master of many trades *; and the volume has been called *Boatman Boy and Other Poems*. We see in this work the "divine discontent" to which Mr. E. M. Forster was referring only the other day in London.

It is a matter for gratification that Oriya literature which has long been neglected by the rest of India is now coming into its own. There are people who learnt the Oriya language in order to be able to appreciate the points in Abhimanyu Samonto Sinharo's *Bidogdho Chintamoni*; of which, it has been said you can never get satiated:

Kabyore triptrio obosado nahin
Jete podhilehen nuan lagu ththayi.

There are signs which lead one to think that there are many more like these whom Oriya literature has interested in recent years.

† The words of *TRIVENI* come to mind: "Scholarship in the west is often measured by the number of books published by a person devoting himself to any branch of learning; but it has always been typical of the East to create traditions of teaching and merge oneself in that labour of love and live in spirit rather than in print." (Oct. 1943).

* Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.

Shiva Chhatrapati: an estimate

PROF. SUDHANSUBIMAL MOOKERJI

The name of Shivaji is one to conjure with even today, more than 250 years after his death. We have yet to know the lover of freedom who does not bow his head reverentially before this petty Jagirdar's son who carved out an independent kingdom for himself and more than held his own against the Mughal Empire at the height of its power.

The Deccan had long felt the impact of the arms of Islam. By the beginning of the 17th century a compromise had been already patched up between the Muslim rulers and their Maratha subjects. The Muslim princes reposed confidence in their Deccani subjects and received faithful service in return.

In the 17th century, says Ranade, "The ground was prepared partly by nature, partly by the religious revival, but chiefly by the long discipline in arms which the country had undergone under Mussalman rule for three hundred years." A change had already taken place in the mental outlook of Maharashtra. The 'Bhagabata' cult placed a high ideal before the country. Heart within and 'Vithoba' overhead, the Marathas had learnt to suffer and sacrifice like true heroes. A new life had begun to pulsate. The great Samartha Ramdas effected a synthesis of the 'Bhakti' and 'Karma' cults. He infused new hopes into the popular mind by the introduction of the worship of Ramachandra and Maruti, the birthday celebration of Ramachandra and similar other methods. People began to believe that Ramachandra had been re-born and that the millennium was at hand.

The latter half of the 16th century and the 17th saw the heyday of Mughal Imperialism, a great foe of Indian nationalism. Northern India had been engulfed. Southern India was seriously threatened by the advancing tide of the Mughal hordes. The reflective section of the population in Maharashtra must have realised the magnitude of the menace. Success of the Mughal arms would lead to a repetition of the 14th century history. When the last efforts of Shahji Bhonsle to save Ahmednagar failed, everyone realised that the danger was already upon him.

It was at this juncture—in 1627 according to some and 1630 according to others—that Shahji Bhonsle's first wife bore him a son. The boy was named Shivaji. The 'Chhatrapati' of future years spent his early life at Poona under the guardianship of his mother and a trusted Brahmin

officer of his father, Dadaji Kondadev by name. It is very difficult to say what literary education he had. Inspired by the stories of the exploits of the heroes of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* he began to dream of the restoration of Hindu suzerainty in India. Step by step, slowly but surely, he built a kingdom, fierce opposition of the Sultan of Bijapur, Emperor Aurungzeb, the Portuguese and the English notwithstanding. He was crowned at Raigarh in 1674 and assumed the titles, "Shiva Chhatrapati" and 'Go-brahmana Pratipalaka.'

The independent kingdom founded by Shivaji was not a very extensive one and it came to an end within nine years of his death in 1680. Kingdoms equalling or even exceeding his in extent were carved out in later years by Hyder Ali and Ranjit Singh, 'The Lion of the Punjab.' Yet Shivaji is more remembered and respected than either.

Shivaji's character, immaculate as it was not, was far above that of his contemporaries. An affectionate father, a dutiful son, a loving husband a devoted son he undoubtedly was. Yet he could not rise above the practices of his age when plurality of wives and concubinage were quite fashionable. Shivaji, by the way, had as many as eight wives.

Shivaji was intensely religious. Devotion to his own religion, however, did not make a bigot of him in an age when bigotry and intolerance were rampant, more specially in the rulers of the land. Freely did he give money and rent-free land for the construction and maintenance of temples and mosques. He respected Hindu and Muhammadan holy men alike and was as much loved by Tukaram and Ramdas as by the Muhammadan saint Sheikh Muhammad. His standing orders to the soldiery were that, if ever a copy of the Koran fell into its hands, it must be returned respectfully to the Muhammadans. At the time of the raid of Surat Shivaji made it a point not to molest the Capuchin missionaries there. This catholicity is a fundamental characteristic of Hinduism, one of the finest flowers of which the Chhatrapati undoubtedly was. He engaged in a life-long struggle for the protection of the Vedas and the brahmins, and the defence of holy places, temples and the honour of women. A Hindu king as he was, he granted complete religious toleration to all classes of his subjects. He did not hesitate to appoint suitably qualified Muhammadans to high posts under him. Of the Muhammadan officials of Shivaji mention may be made of Munshi Hyder, who later on became the Chief Justice of the Mughal Empire under Aurungzeb, Siddi Sambal, Siddi Misri, Daulat Khan—all Admirals, and Siddi Halal and Nur Khan—both Captains.

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Shivaji had a strong strain of mysticism in his mind. Thrice he made up his mind to renounce the world. Tukaram and Samartha Ramdas—the former twice and the latter once—dissuaded him from such a course. On his way to Karnatak later in life (1677), he made ready to cut off his own head as an offering in the temple of Mallikarjuna. Tradition has it that Bhawani herself appeared before him and prevented him from taking this step.

Respect for women was one of the noblest traits of Shivaji's character. The Bengali poet Yogindra Nath Basu gives a vivid pen picture of this aspect of his character when he represents Shivaji taking an oath before his mother:

"From today every Hindu in Maharashtra is a brother unto me,
"And every woman this my mother Jijabai."

When after the conquest of Kalyan, Abaji brought the daughter-in-law of its Governor, Maula Ahmed, as a present for Shivaji, he told her, "How divinely handsome you are, mother! Had I been a son of yours, I would have been as beautiful." The lady was sent to her relatives and Abaji reprimanded. His eldest son Shambhuji once outraged the modesty of a brahmin lady. The matter was reported to him and the offender had to run away for his very life. Shivaji had no mercy for offenders against women and in his kingdom offence against female modesty was a capital crime.

Shivaji's devotion to his mother was unique and without a parallel. He would obtain beforehand her approval for all serious and important work undertaken by him. It was from her lips that he heard the stories of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* which sowed the seeds of freedom in his heart and imbued him with the idea of setting up a 'Dharma-rajya.' It was his mother's blessings that sustained him in the most critical situations of life. Before leaving for the Imperial Court at Agra in 1666, he made elaborate arrangements for the administration of the kingdom during his absence and Jijabai was made the regent. Shahji died in 1664 as the result of a hunting accident. When, in obedience to the time-honoured custom, Jijabai made herself ready to perform the 'Sati,' it was the tears of Shivaji which dissuaded her. Napoleon Bonaparte also loved and adored his mother; but this did not restrain him from sexual aberrations. Shivaji's respect for his mother, on the other hand, was transformed into respect for women.

Shivaji was an autocrat and his orders however unjust had to be carried out willy-nilly. Yet a tyrant he was not and would never let any

act of oppression go unpunished or uncensored. Once during the monsoon a regiment or two of his army were encamped at Chiplun in Ratnagiri. It is just possible that some of the stories of their oppression on the civilian population reached the ears of Shivaji. He directed the soldiers that they must pay reasonably for the commodities purchased.

Was Shivaji a sanyasin? No. He was a man of the world. A votary of freedom, he judged everything in the light of whether it advanced or retarded the cause so dear to his heart. Thus, Chandra Rao of Javli was treacherously killed under his instructions. He behaved 'treacherously with the Sultan of Golkonda during the invasion of Karnatak. Did he not fall off from the ideal of 'Hindvi Swaraj,' albeit for the time being, by accepting the Treaty of Purandhar in 1665? Did not his invasions of Bijapur, Karnatak and the Mughal domains render thousands homeless?

A practical idealist that Shivaji was, he believed that the end justified the means. The conquest of Javli was necessary for the establishment of an independent kingdom. Open war would have led to loss of many lives and avoidable waste of much valuable time. Hence Shivaji had recourse to treachery. But for the treaty of Purandhar the dream of 'Hindvi Swaraj' would be nipped in the bud. Hence he accepted the terms, harsh and humiliating as they were.

The quote Sir J. N. Sarkar, "unfailing insight into the character of others, efficiency of arrangements, an instinctive perception of what was practicable and profitable under the circumstances," contributed pre-eminently to the success of Shivaji. In the words of the same authority, Shivaji possessed "that unfailing sense of reality in politics, that recognition of the exact possibilities of his time (*tact des choses possibles*) which Cavour defined as the essence of statesmanship." He knew full well how far his resources could carry him, how long a certain policy could be pursued profitably and where he should stop. Thus, be it to hit an adversary or to strike a new alliance, he would choose the most opportune moment. He is one of those rare historical personalities who did never commit a single diplomatic blunder. Popular belief ascribed this infallibility to the grace of goddess Bhawani; but we moderns know that it was that 'third eye' which is the essence of true genius.

A true leader must be a shrewd judge of character and this Shivaji certainly was. He possessed the uncanny gift of diving to the depths of the character of those he came in contact with almost at once and would never put a round peg into a square hole. His officers were always well-chosen.

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A leader, however able and great, to be successful, must have a vigilant eye on his lieutenants. He must not try to do everything himself nor should he allow his subordinates to act as they like. Philip II of Spain and Aurungzeb, the latter in particular, gifted and laborious as they were, were no leaders, because they had little confidence in the ability and sincerity of their officers. Daulat Rao Scindia of Gwalior, on the other hand, was an automaton in the hands of his European Generals whom he could not control. A leader must do neither too much nor too little. This gift of leadership Shivaji possessed in abundance and this is why his officers, drawn as they were from different castes, classes and communities—the Desasth, the Karhade, the Semi, the Chitpavan, the Prabhu Kayastha, the Maratha, the Gujar, the Muhammadan and the like—vied with one another in proving themselves useful and faithful to their master.

Shivaji would take care to draw up beforehand a clear-cut programme of executing his plans. Thus, before the sacks of Surat, the first invasion of Berar and the Karnatak expedition, he spent many months in collecting detailed information of the places in question and his agents were already at work in all these places when the blows actually fell.

Shivaji's first step in the path of freedom, call it a leap in the dark if you like, was taken in 1657 when he created a diversion in favour of Bijapur by raiding the south-western corner of the Mughal Deccan. The Mughal power had reached its zenith. There was no vestige of independence anywhere in India. Even the Sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda acknowledged the supremacy of the Great Mughal on the Peacock Throne at Agra.

In a series of tussles with the Mughal, the Portuguese, the English and with Bijapur, at one time or another, Shivaji came out victorious. His army was a model of efficiency. What is more, he built a navy, which fought quite a number of battles on equal terms with the English, the Portuguese and the Abyssinians of Janjira. The Maratha aristocracy, as noted above, was apathetic, if not anti-pathetic in the beginning, to the cause of independence—the cause which was the very breath of Shivaji's nostrils. But they rallied under the 'Bhagwa Jenda' gradually. A born leader of men that Shivaji was, he gave to all classes of people under him the opportunity of serving the State. Co-operation, sincere and heart-whole, of all strata of society is indispensable in a war of national liberation. The so-called upper and lower classes constitute respectively

the brain and brawn, as it were, of the body politic, and brain and brawn must co-operate. Shivaji had a clear perception of this truth. Hence he recruited his followers from all classes of society and the depressed classes of Maharashtra—the Moolis, the Kolis, the Mahars and the Ramo-shirs—were provided with employments under Shivaji. They were given to understand that the country was theirs in common with the upper classes, and in return they spilled their life-blood ungrudgingly for its sake.

Shivaji challenged Delhi and Bijapur and taught his co-religionists that they might be more than camp-followers, that they might be independent leaders in peace and war alike. He founded a State and demonstrated that the Hindus could be able leaders no less than consummate generals. In the words of that authority on Maratha History, Sir J. N. Sarkar, "Shivaji has shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise from beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage, exclusion from the administration and legal repression; it can put forth new leaves and branches, it can again lift its head to the skies." (*Shivaji and His Times*—P. 406). A great nation builder and constructive genius, he proved that the Hindu race can produce not 'Jemadars' and 'Chitnises' alone, but leaders, rulers and kings as well.

In days gone by India has known generals and makers of kingdoms as great as and even greater than Shivaji. But Shivaji's name is inscribed in a bolder relief on every true heart than any one of them. For one thing, it reflects no small credit on this Jaigirdar's son to have founded an independent kingdom in the teeth of the keen opposition of the mighty hosts of Delhi among others. The rise of the Marathas under Shivaji was not, as Grant Duff would have us believe, a conflagration in the Sahyadris. He galvanized the scattered and aimless Marathas into life and welded them into a nation. He it was who inspired them with the idea and ideal of a 'Hindvi Swaraj' and taught them to merge their minor differences in the face of a common danger.

What urged Shivaji to a conflict with the Muslim rulers of the Deccan and the great Mughal of Delhi? Shivaji, had he been so inclined, might have wealth, position and influence but for the asking. His father, Shahaji, a prominent figure in contemporary Deccan politics, was not unknown in the Mughal Court. Had he thought Bijapur too small for his ambition, he might have sought a career in the service of Delhi. But his was a choice diametrically opposite which plunged him in no end of perils. He was wide-awake to the consequences of a defeat, which would lead to death

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and worse. The victors in those days felt no scruples to wreak vengeance on the ladies of the family of the vanquished. Not infrequently would they be sent to the victor's harem to spend the remaining days of life without the prestige of wifehood and the joy of motherhood. How many of us have ever made an attempt to appraise properly the magnitude of the sacrifice this arch-rebel was prepared to make or the seriousness of the risks he ran? The worldly wise scoffed at his endeavours as foolhardiness. From the Nimbalkars of Karnatak, the Ghorpades of Mudhol and the Badis of Savanta—all relatives—he had nothing but opposition. Dadaji Kondadev, his mentor during boyhood, adolescence and the early years of youth did not welcome the prospect of a conflict with the Muslims. But opposition is but straw to the fire of idealism burning in the heart of a votary of freedom.

It may be argued that love of adventure prompted Shivaji to choose the path of conflict. Adventures he might have in plenty by fighting like his father against the Mughals under the banner of Bijapur or any other Deccan Sultanate. So the argument lacks legs to stand upon. One thing more should be taken into consideration. Love of adventure may make a man disregard his personal safety, but seldom the safety of those he loves and adores. This he can do only when a duty higher, a mission nobler than the attainment of mere material gains calls him. This mission in Shivaji's case was the establishment of an independent kingdom and the forging of a new nation. The Marathas before Shivaji 'were scattered like atoms through many Deccani kingdoms' and were 'mere hirelings, mere servants of aliens.' To put it in another way, 'they were always subordinates, never leaders.' Shivaji demonstrated by his adventures and achievements that the Marathas could build and rule kingdoms, that they could more than hold their own against Muslim and foreign adversaries. Long centuries of political serfdom had generated lethargy and an inferiority-complex—those cankers of mind in national character. Shivaji removed them by a magic wand, as it were, and the nation at once became conscious of its potentialities.

The lesson Shivaji taught in the 17th century has not, again, altogether forgotten. His ideal of 'Hindvi Swaraj' animated the Marathas and it may be said without exaggeration that for more than a century after Shivaji's death in 1680 the Marathas held the thread of political destinies of India. In the end it was from the hands of the Marathas that the English lifted the suzerainty of India.

Shivaji is dead—long live Shivaji!

The Garba Dance

By HIRALAL GODIWALA

(At the end of the *Nava-Ratra*—the Nine-Night Festival—in Gujarat in honour of the Mother, the *garba*—little earthen pots with lamps inside, dedicated to the Mother—are left at the temple or set afloat on the waters of the river. This happens on the Dusserah day, at the end of nine glorious nights of fasting and worship accompanied by *garba* dances in street corners and on public squares. Women, but sometimes men or both men and women, join in these dances. The setting of the following poem is Navdi Bunder, Surat)

"Let's dance one last, long dance
With wistful yearning,
Desperate,
Yet gay.

'My Amba, my Goddess, my Queen !
With heavy hearts we send you away
We bid you a last, long, sad farewell.
Come back tomorrow,
Soon.' "

So round and round and round,
With dancing feet and bodies swaying
'Neath the moon,
They dance—these men and women—
One last, long, desperate dance
Around the lamplit, earthen pots.
And then they set the pots afloat
Upon the waters of the river.

The moonlit *ghat* looks as of 'nother world
But ours.
Strange shadows seem to haunt
These old, enchanted steps.
The flickering, lamplit pots are set afloat;

And, one by one,
Upon the magic waters of a moonlit river,
The pots float on ;
Frail, yet strong with the strength of the votaries,
Bearing the soul of a people away,
And leaving but haunting memories
Behind.

"With heavy hearts we send you away
My Amba Bhavani, my Queen !
Come back tomorrow,
Soon.' "

The Send-off

BY HIRALAL GODIWALA

(*Rendered from a Gujerati folk-Song*)

(Here is a translation of the Gujerati song sung on the occasion. It is impossible to bring out in English the fascinatingly sad melody of the original song. The rendering given below conveys the bare sense and that too inadequately.)

Issuing out of Pāvāgarh, Mother,

You came and made your home in the city, Bhawāni!

Little bells they jingle round the feet of Bhawāni.

Where shall I have your *mōgrā* planted, Mother ?

In the flower-garden shall I have your *mōgrā* planted, Bhawāni !

Little bells they jingle round the feet of Bhawāni.

If you stay on, Mother, I shall cook some sweet, rich, half-ground
wheat for you ;

If you go, some fine white macaroni in ghee, Bhawāni !

Little bells they jingle round the feet of Bhawāni ;

If you stay on, Mother, we shall have a festive car fashioned for you ;

If you go, I shall dress you up in rich garments from the South, Bhawāni !

Little bells they jingle round the feet of Bhawāni.

Many a Mickle

BY K. SRIDHAR RAO

It is remarkable how money has a way of walking out on you. The more careful you are, the more devious the way it has of disappearing. Very few people realise this. And fewer people realise that in moving it is only serving the purpose of its being. Among the few I have met, I must mention the old *darzee* (tailor) of the little town of Bilikal. He is a shrivelled little fellow of about sixty summers with an engaging smile and a tongue that could wag without end, unless, of course, one were to offer him money for a glass of toddy. In the latter circumstance, he would pause for a while off and on, as he moistened the organ in question at your expense. But the subsequent flow would be the brightest and wittiest the old fellow was capable of.

On the question of money the old man would say, "Money, my dear sir, you never can keep for ever. It has a way of escaping from you. You may put it in a purse, put the purse in a bag, lock the bag in a small box, and place the box in the iron safe, and still you will find, after a time, it has disappeared. I always say, sir, it is endowed with a diamond beak, which enables it to burrow through the strongest steel. I suppose, sir, you know the richest man of our town."

When I told him I had yet to hear of him, the *darzee* continued, "Well, sir, his name is Achyut Dhanya. While he was still young--a long time ago, that was—he went to Madaripatnam to seek his fortune. He opened a shop in a small way, as at that time he had not a pie of his own. Within a short while he was able to enlarge this shop into a store for all sorts of cutlery and metal goods. But the baser metals were not his passion. So after a few years, we find him in possession of a well-established firm of jewellers. He retired a few years ago, one of the biggest diamond merchants of the city of Madaripatnam. He is back at Bilikal now. He is so fond of money, they say here, that there is a reason for his retirement. When he heard rumours of a drop in the diamond market, he could not contemplate without agony the loss this would mean to him. So he is said to have sold the business to his only son, Amar Dhanya, at a profit, mark you, and quietly come back here with his hoard.

"You, sir, are probably under the impression," continued the *darzee*, "that old man Dhanya is awaiting the call of his Maker. If so, you

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are mistaken. He is the master of only sixteen lakhs and would be too ill at ease to face his Maker with such a small fortune to his credit. He is assiduously cultivating his hobby here. Did I hear you say plants, sir? No, sir, agriculture yields such poor returns, and, so uncertain the yield is. Old Achyut could never risk his money on that. He is, my dear sir, a breeder of money. There is also risk in that, you say. Not for a Dhanya, sir. For you and me, yes, but for Achyut, decidedly no. He does not give his money to Tom, Dick and Harry. Personal security is not good enough for him. Land has a tendency to go down in price. But if the land is adjacent to his own, and you are prepared to borrow only about one eighth or one sixth of its value, he may consider the proposition. There is always the prospect of getting the land for next to nothing, when you are not able to pay the debt and the accumulated interest. In all other cases, land is too cumbersome a commodity to deal in. Our old Dhanya prefers gold best. Give him solid gold or golden ornaments, Achyut's money is at your disposal—provided, of course, you agree to the interest. To his best friends and relations, he charges only 8 per cent. This includes interest at the rate of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent plus the supertax of 3 or 4 annas in the rupee, which Achyut has to pay the Government. For other clients the interest may be a little more according to the party's need and the type of security he is able to provide. So you see, sir, Achyut is not the usual type of usurer. But I have to tell you also the legend that is current in our town. It says, "If you borrow from old Skin-flint, make ready to hand over to him your all—house, lands and other property." Achyut is always willing to rely on his fate. And Fate has never so far failed to reward him amply.

"Young Amar, sir, was carefully brought up by his father," said the *darzee*, "and knew the value of money as well as old Dhanya. He had received an education which his father never could have dreamt of, and also the benefit of foreign travel. He could, on occasion, be actually liberal with the cash his father had provided him with. These occasions, though not very frequent, had usually to do with his vanity. Like all upstarts, praise of his family, or his father, tickled him most. He venerated his father. What else could you expect? Had he, not provided him liberally with that most useful, most needed, most coveted article, money? So the mention of his father brought out all the generosity in his nature."

"It was about three years ago," continued the old man "that a young fellow with a hearty look about him called on Amar. He said he was devoting his life to the cause of the depressed. He had heard Amar

spoken of so high in his native town of Bilikal, that he had lost no time in coming to him. A man of Amar's position and one with his family tradition, he felt sure, would not fail to help his cause. Of course, Amar's father was very kind and had voluntarily given him a letter of recommendation. The effect of all this on Amar was of the most pleasant kind. Amar saw his father's writing, saw his father's familiar signature, and without further ado, presented the young man with a hundred-rupee note. The young man, with profuse expressions of gratitude, took his leave, and Amar went on with his work. About four or five weeks later a hefty mussalman walked into Amar's office, and thrust a letter under his nose. He informed Amar that he was on his way to Mecca, and that he required help in carrying out the holy pilgrimage. He came from Bilikal. Achyut Dhanya's kind letter was of great help to him so far. Amar looked at his father's signature and then at the hefty fellow. He took out a hundred rupees from the box and handed them over. The man pocketed the money, and went on his way, presumably to the holy city. Amar sat thinking. Not many weeks after, an elderly man with a greying moustache crept diffidently into Amar's presence, and spoke about his daughter who was rapidly growing and getting past the marriageable age. He had a suitable boy in view to whom he hoped to marry her. But he had not the money for the dowry. Amar's father—. At the mention of his father, Amar asked him to produce the letter, and when he saw the revered name, he produced the usual note for a hundred rupees. He did not wait for the old man's blessing. He was too busy wondering what was wrong with his father. Suddenly it flashed on him. His father was hurriedly making peace with his Creator. And why should he not? Had the Almighty not been particularly good to him? Thus communing, Amar reconciled himself to the charity he was forced to give. After this, at regular intervals of about a month, there appeared before him *seriatim*, a *sanyasi*, who was founding a home for other *sanyasis* on the banks of the Ganges, a *pater familias* with a larger family than most, a lover of stray and lost dogs, and a host of other needy people, whom later Amar failed to notice or take count of. Amar always looked for his father's name at the bottom of the letter before him, and happily paid out his quota."

"It was last 'month,'" said the old tailor, "that Achyut decided to pay a visit to his son at Madaripatnam, and see for himself if his son was shaping as nicely to his treatment as his money was. The very day of his arrival, he saw Amar paying out a hundred rupees to a shabby disreputable person without so much as a question. When Achyut protested, Amar said, 'Oh! he is one of your pensioners.' Achyut was puzzled. Amar

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explained that for the last three years he had been regularly paying out once or twice a month sums of money to all sorts of people bringing letters of recommendation from old Dhanya. Achyut could not remember having written such letters recently. Warning Amar to be more careful, Achyut decided to stay in town longer than he intended. Not many days after, the same shabby man appeared again. Instead of receiving the usual payment, he was asked by a stern old man who he was. When he said his master had sent him with the letter for money, old Achyut looked at the letter. It was written by him and dated three years ago. Both father and son decided to see who the man's master was, and asked him to lead them to him. The man took them to a dirty and disreputable quarter of the city. When they walked into the mean house, they found a stout and hearty-looking young man very much the worse for drink, surrounded by a number of empty and half empty bottles, and in the company of a none-too-reputable looking female. Achyut recognising the young man said, 'Anand Kinchit! that explains it.' Father and son walked back, the father resolving never to write a recommendation letter in future, and the son concluding that the best of parents was not fool-proof.

"In our town," continued the *Darzee*, "Anand needs no introduction. He is as well-known for his pranks, as Achyut is for his money. For the information of a stranger like you, sir, I have to add that he is the champion ne'er-do-weal of our place. He has not done a spot of work all his twenty-six years. But he has never been in want. He is always an adept at getting something for nothing. When he heard of Amar's partiality for his tough old parent, he did a little thinking. He had so far got nothing out of old Dhanya nor did he entertain hopes of touching him for a round sum of money. He would part with anything but that. But would he be good enough for a letter of recommendation, of course, not directly to his son? Anand proposed to try the chance, and approached Achyut for a donation to the colony he was starting for the depressed classes. Achyut, of course, refused. Anand then spoke of the influence Achyut's name had among the townspeople. Would he not help his cause by giving him a letter of recommendation? Achyut had no objection to that. If people were so careless of their money, why should they not be deprived of it for a good cause? Moreover, he wanted to be in the good books of Anand, knowing his reputation. More than all, it added to his sense of importance to give such a letter. So Anand achieved his purpose. After this it was very simple. Once every few days, Anand would come to him under a different name with an added property-beard or moustache, mostly at dusk

or after dark, knowing that old Achyut was short-sighted. Each time he appealed on behalf of a new charity, and never failed to eulogise the old man and his influence for good among the community. Within a month he was proceeding to Madaripatnam, bag and baggage, most of the latter being a dozen letters from old Skinflint. His adventures at that city you already know. Anand Kinchit was the diamond beak employed by money to break the Dhanya safe. What is that you say, sir? For a man of Achyut's wealth a matter of four or five thousand is nothing, you think. Well, I beg to differ, sir. For you and me, a loss of five thousand rupees is just a loss of that amount. But for a Dhanya, sir, the agony of such a loss is only comparable to the grief felt by a mother at the death of a dearly loved child. Don't you realise, sir, that this amount had lain in his coffers much longer than any human child could stay in his house? All this boils down to what I said in the beginning. Put not all your hopes in money. It is here today and gone to-morrow. Even a Dhanya could not keep all of it."

So saying the old man rose, and thanking me for the toddy, walked quietly away. I was touched by his talk and said, "Poor man! In a larger sphere and a nobler walk in life, he could have made a place for himself in the world."

One of the bystanders said, "Why do you pity him, master? He is not so poor as he looks. By diligently plying his needle and thread for the past sixty years (he was barely a toddler when he began) he has amassed a fortune of sixty thousand rupees, for all his talk of money with the diamond beak."

I could say nothing to that. Could you?

The Poetry of Toru Dutt—A Study

BY P. SAMA RAO

Though still recent, Toru Dutt has already become a legendary figure. She is the second memorable Indian, the first being her cousin Romesh Chunder Dutt, with his translation of the *Ramayana*, who gave the English-speaking world a sublime idea of Indian culture through the medium of poetry. She is, therefore, a pioneer in the field of Indo-Anglian poetry.

Quite charming in her teens, and gifted with the power of a genius that is catholic; she spent her impressionable nonage for her education mostly in France, the Western land of poetry and romance. The solid foundation of Indian culture on which she had been reared, and which permeated her entire being, helped her to withstand the onslaughts of the flippant social tendencies of the French girl. It is this deep-seated Indian spirit that helped her to treasure up a fragrant memory of the lady who presented her with roses 'sweet... and large as lotus flowers,' in her NEAR HASTINGS;

"But sweeter was the love that gave
These flowers to one unknown,

...

The lady's name I do not know,
Her face no more may see;
But yet, oh yet I love her so!
Blest, happy, may she be!"

She broods with a detachment of her own over Savitri, Uma and Sita, unexcelled for grace, loveliness, faith, devotion, chastity and nobility. Toru's portrait of woman is not of mere parochial but of universal interest. Her *Ancient Ballads and Lyrics of Hindustan* is a synthesis, a distillation, as it were, of all that is good, loveable, and enduring in all life and thought.

The pre-eminent quality of Toru Dutt's poetry is the Vedic atmosphere which she successfully recaptured for the benefit of the modern industrialised mortal of the nineteenth century. This is lyrical with the scent of lotuses that vaunt their pristine glory in the glassy lakes of the countryside, with clouds of bees buzzing around them; while a little far-off on the outskirts, amidst the peace and quiet of the rural hermitages, peacocks and *kokilas* wail their cries from out of the luscious verdure of the tamarind, the sal and the mango.

SAVITRI is the longest and perhaps the best and the most admirable of her pieces from all standpoints. It traces the history of the heroine of that name—the birth, the upbringing, her marriage with its hectic honeymoon, her widowhood, and the revival of her lord after she vanquishes Yama on his own terms—in an atmosphere at once classically simple, luscious and sublime. She is born of blessings from Siva, the ever-auspicious, and, as such, she teems with all the virtues of beauty, spiritual strength and chastity of his own spouse Uma.

On a summer morn she espies her future lord and guide, Satyavan, a virtuous youth amidst his golden fields and elects him. The sad story of his father, the blind and dethroned Dyumatsen moves her to tears to the same intensity as the exploits of Othello did Desdemona. Neither their poverty nor the dethronement were allowed to interfere with her choice as Dyumatsen's merit 'still remained a star' to her, and she had already plighted her troth. Nor were the dissuasions of her father and Naradamuni, on the score she would soon be widowed, of any avail; for she was a Vedic *sati* like Anusuya and Maitreyi who could outface Fate, and firmly believed that

Once and once only 'tis writ
Shall woman pledge her faith and hand,

She was confident that she could contravene destiny if she pursued the path of righteousness with duty,—devotion to her lord—as her watchword. The marriage soon comes about, and

Blessings in a storm of sound
At every step the couple greet,
... ...
And now with rice and gold all bless.

A veritable Hindu wife that she is, Savitri has no being distinct from that of her lord, and her conduct is such 'as to illumine all the place'. With simplicity and grace she discharges each household duty, and strives to comfort, cherish and help all she comes across, so that

The hours passed peacefully along
And rippling bright day followed day.

Satyavan's duties, on the other hand, comprised the collection of fuel, flowers and fruits for the daily sacrifice in the wild solitude; while hers, besides, included the feeding of brahmins and birds. Her honeymoon is not, however, an unsaddened song; for there was a skeleton in her heart

Looming in shadow, somewhat dun,
.....that fatal, fatal speech of Naradamuni.

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She is not without courage to face the situation. She believed that the God who decreed the blow for her could himself vacate the decree if it pleased Him. The Ides of March—the fourteenth of the Moon in Joystee—soon arrives and she,

Incessant in her prayers from morn,

...
...
...

Her heart fluttered like a wren
That sees the shadow of a hawk.

On that fatal day as well, Satyavan heads for the forest to gather fruit of the evening. Her heart is a flutter because Fate contrived with 'unseen bands' to draw him on, as though he were her 'plaything with her breath' to blow him 'where she lists in space.' Although night hovered with 'ebon wing' she goes with him 'hand in hand' in quest of fruits. Their issuing out together into the woods with the 'sun withdrawn' and 'a twilight and a crescent moon' changing 'all asperities of shape' and 'toning down all colours...with a blue veil of silvered crape,' and 'the buds that to the dews expand' is the most charming of her idylls—the last flicker of joy before it goes out. It has all the pointedness of beauty appropriate to the situation, amounting to a dramatic irony. Hand in hand, they go even against Fate! The tragic hour strikes, and Satyavan begins to complain all of a sudden of a pain in his head as though he felt 'the cobra's fangs' and finds the universe, whirling and whirling around him, finally recede;

A mist before his vision hangs;
The trees whirl dizzily around
In a fantastic fashion wild;
He staggers like a sleepy child.

Whereto? Not on to the mother earth entire, but quiet on into Savitri's lap, his one solace even in death! 'The branches flap' as though they were also shaken by death, and the 'fireflies glimmer all around' in a perturbation that the kindred soul of Satyavan had left its earthly tenement for a higher, and perhaps, a better abode. All is dark, terribly dark; and both 'look statues magic bound.'

What follows is of ethical interest up to the time the Lord of Death blesses Satyavan into life again, and hands back to her his released soul 'no bigger than the human thumb,' which she places on his heart, whence like a bee it finds its cell.

Satyavan soon wakes up, but 'wholly bewildered and amazed,' with memories of his past slowly coming back 'like some old remembered song'—'a tangled thread.' The poet celebrates their return home

in an atmosphere of pearliness that precedes the Indian dawn, in sensuous phraseology, never beyond its mark;

And 'neath the trees they hurry past'
For Hope's fair light before them burns.

- Under the faint beams of the stars
How beautiful appeared the flowers,
Light scarlet, flecked with golden bars
Of the *palasas*, in the bowers
- That Nature there herself had made
Without the aid of man. At times
Trees on their path cast densest shade
And nightingales sang mystic rhymes,
Their fears and sorrows to assuage.

* * * *

BUTTOO is no less enticing with a sublimity of another kind. She rightly calls the hunter-class youth, famous as Ekalavya, 'VATU,' because he is possessed of Brahma-knowledge, though unsophisticated.

He is a commoner of the Valmiki caste. Not knowing the lowness of his caste he aspires to learn archery of the brahmin guru Dronacharya. His unlettered mind does not deem it necessary that the guru should be worshipped only in flesh and blood, and determines to acquire knowledge at any cost. He adjourns to the 'forest verge' where Nature with her children, 'the sombre sal,' 'the light-leaved tamarind,' and 'the seemul gorgeous as a bride,' and 'herds, still herds of tame deer, rubbing their foreheads smooth against his arms' untouched with any caste prejudice welcome him as though he was still another child of hers come back home. So he elects to live with them all 'a calm, calm life' and learn of them the higher truths Drona had mercilessly denied to impart to him. Against this forest background of calmness he makes and sets up an image of Drona and worships him,

By a strained sense, by constant prayer
By steadfastness of heart and will;

and with a 'conscience clear,.....joined to a meek humility.' Thus he learns to see the 'One-ness'—that is in his guru, God Himself, in the many, and the many in the One; in a universe of which himself, his guru, and Nature formed but a few and, after all, tiny units. What his guru could not teach Arjuna—selflessness—this rejected disciple of low class, learnt of him quite Galahad-wise. When Drona at the instigation of Arjuna demanded his right thumb for *dakshina*, he, with a nobility comparable only to Karna's charity, that 'knew its own exceeding great reward,' whipped out his knife

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to sever it. The poet's description of the incident is sublime in its simplicity :

Glanced the sharp knife one moment high,
The severed thumb was on the sod,
There was no tear in Buttoo's eye,
He left the matter with his God.

—who was none other than his 'inanimate' guru. It is not surprising that men link sweet Buttoo's name with self-help, truth and modesty. This poem is truly an Aristotlean tragedy, which, while purging us of bad emotions, ennobles our souls.

In JOGADHYA UMA we have delightful evidence of Toru's capacity as a romantic poet. Her conception of romance has all the ethereal charm of a *bhakta*'s soul craving for a union with his beloved God. She commemorates this in this choice idyll, a tale about the customary gift of shell-bracelets to Uma at Kairogram. One day the goddess sits on a bank of a lake-like tank enjoying her own loveliness in its waters. A bangle-hawker approaches the spot crying out his wares. Like her human prototype she is anxious to possess some ; purchases them and when asked to pay directs him to collect the price from her 'father—the temple priest' of the village ; or, if he did not either pay or had no money to pay, the father would find some in a casket 'streaked with bright vermillion' near the idol. The hawker believes her, and is subsequently blessed with wealth for his belief. The priest has been praying to realise her by many a vigil, with the intense ardour and devotion of a Sri Gauranga. The pedlar soon arrives at his door and demands the money. The 'father' is surprised that 'some minx had played a trick,' because he had no daughter. On the pedlar's assuring him that she had 'such a face' that could not deceive and telling him of the further direction how to find the cash in the casket, and on verification, he is convinced that his erstwhile minx is only Uma come down to earth to test him. So he rushes with the pedlar to the tank to catch her and prays for her return quickly for worship. She reveals herself :

Sudden from out the water sprang
A rounded arm, on which they saw
As high the lotus buds among
It rose, the bracelet white, with awe.
Then a wide ripple toss and swung
The blossoms on that liquid plain.

This description has all the simplicity and grandeur of Tennyson's description of the rising of Excalibur from its watery depths.

There are in this poem many a characteristic line of the poet which endow it with lyrical beauty. Her picture of Uma is etched with a classical restraint;

And at the entrance arch there sat
Full face against the morning light,
A fair young woman with large eyes
And dark hair falling to her zone.

Oh! she was lovely, but her look
Had something of a high command
That filled with awe. Aside she shook
Intruding curls by breezes fanned
And blown across her brows and face.

Her delineations of the countryside in the following have all the alluring gusto of the Indian atmosphere at sunrise:

Along the road, in morning's glow
With a "Moo" the kine

In knee-deep grass, stood magic bound
And half-awake, involved in mist,
That floated in dun coils profound
Till by the sudden sunbeams kist
Rich rainbow hues broke all around.

...
...
Huge straw ricks, log huts full of grain
Sleek cattle, flowers, a tinkling bell
Spoke in a language sweet and plain
Here smiling peace and plenty dwell.

THE ROYAL ASCETIC AND THE HIND as well as the LEGEND OF DHRUVA have been taken from the *Vishnu Purana*. In the former Toru Dutt tries to inculcate the truth that it is sin to cast off love by 'return to the forest shades. For that was to abandon duties high.'

And like a recreant soldier leave the post
Where God had placed him as a sentinel.

True happiness lies in him only when he discharges his duties as conscience dictates to him. As Kabir put it '*Maname Kasi, maname Ganga*'—both Kasi and Ganga are in his mind only. So, according to the poetess true salvation lay

Not in seclusion, nor apart from all
But in the heart and bustle of the world;
'Mid sorrow, sickness, suffering and sin,
Must he labour still with a loving soul.

This she illustrates from the *vanaprastha* of the illustrious monarch, Bharata of Saligram, who shedding all his earthly ties went into a forest 'to attain

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perfect dominion on his soul.' But he soon found instead, Destiny, the inscrutable goddess enmeshing him with an affection to an orphaned hind. He soon began to live in her. Even when his last moments arrived he could not free himself of this tie. The poet reaches the height of pathos in the following:

He too watched and watched
His favourite through a blinding film of tears
And could not think of the Beyond at hand.

She, however, differs from the Puranic conclusion and asserts that because the hind engendered love once again in his withered heart, the Heavens were as much open to him as they would have been if it had not been 'brought strangely on his path;' for, God was love and should be adored

But with a love, in character akin
To his unselfish and all-including love.

Just as Uma, Savitri and Sita are the poet's ideal types of women, Dhruva and Prahlad are her boy types, while Rama in her LAKSHMAN' is her paragon of manliness. The physical bearing of her perfect man is her portrait of Rama;

The lion and the grisly bear
Cower when they see his royal look,
Sun-staring eagles of the air
His glance of anger cannot brook,
Pythons, and cobras at his tread
To their most secret coverts glide
Bowed to the dust each serpent head
Erect before in hooded pride.

In her LEGEND OF DHRUVA she harps again on the Karmic theory of the Hindus, and stresses that on humility

Descends prosperity, even as water flows
Down to low grounds.

She advocates the following precepts through Dhruva's mother, Suneeti;

Collect a large sum of virtues ; thence
A goodly harvest must to thee arise.
Be meek, devout, and friendly, full of love
Intent to do good to the human race,
And to all creatures sentient made of God.

She defines the truly wise man as one

Who is content with what he has and seeks
Nothing beyond, but in whatever sphere
Lowly or great, God placed him, works in faith.

Like SINDHU, PRAHLAD is also a story of nemesis, with one small difference. In the former the involuntary action of Dasaratha has been

punished, while in the latter it is the deliberate sin of Hiranyakasipu. But in PRAHLAD, it may be noted that the poet seeks to give a political significance to the whole affair. His tyranny over his subjects, his total denial of the supremacy of Vishnu and arrogating to himself the same are in direct contrast with his son Prahlada's meekness and recognition of the omni-presence of God ; for, he says,

The gods who made us are the life
Of living creatures, small and great.
We see them not, but space is rife
With their bright presence and their state.
They are the parents of us all,
'Tis they create, sustain, redeem
Heaven, earth, and hell, they hold in thrall.

In this belief Prahlad marches to every punishment meted out to him by his father, 'all unmoved and calm, erect and stately as a palm.' He is not afraid to die because 'to die is but to lose one's breath,' and death is no annihilation, for new worlds of further and better existence open to his view. The tyrants are exhorted to realise that 'Demos' assumes that 'awful shape' of Narasimha to put them down whenever their subjects suffer pain at their hands.

THE TREE OF LIFE and OUR CASUARINA TREE are the two reflective pieces in this volume, imaginatively sad, autobiographical, and perhaps premonitory of the poet's early end. THE TREE OF LIFE is dreamy in its texture, and is in the manner of a mystical experience of Wordsworth. The imagery is quite Western in the sense that no oriental poet ever craved for the binding of any laurel wreath over his head, nor does he ever expect an outside agency, however representative of God, to do it in recognition of excellence. But the thought

Bind too my father's forehead with these leaves

is Indian, and expresses her love for her father between whom and herself she could scarcely see any difference, because she owed her being, physical as well as spiritual, entirely to him. This poem seems to have been composed on her death-bed when thoughts of the hereafter were already buzzing in her brain. There is a sort of premonition of her early end in the following lines, The superambient atmosphere has been cleverly manipulated to be chilly and sepulchral, with an imagery which is weird :

It was an open plain
Illimitable—stretching, stretching, oh, so far !
And o'er it that strange light,—a glorious light
Like that the stars shed over fields of snow
In a clear, cloudless, frosty winter night,

THE POETRY OF TORU DUTT—A STUDY

Only intenser in its brilliance, calm.

... ... —When lo ! the light
Was gone—the light as of the stars when snow
Lies deep upon the ground.

There are no doubt Western concepts, like the ones in the lines

“The nightingales sang mystic rhymes”

or “The mien elate
Like hers, the goddess of the chase
On Latmos hill.”

or “E'en echo slept within her cell”

which are, however, pardonable, as they do not either misinterpret her spirit or falsify her spiritual being.

THE CASUARINA TREE like the 'Green Willow' of Ethel Mannin, the 'Yew' of Wordsworth, and the 'Elm' of Maxwell is a delightful evidence of her childhood days and after. She sees in it; as through a crystal clear, the various vicissitudes she had passed through in her own life. It becomes holy because of this and of the other fact that giantlike she too withstood the cramping influences of the parasitic creeper of circumstance wearing them like a scarf, and flowering still

Into crimson clusters all the boughs among,

with an intrinsic strength and beauty. She also hears 'a dirge-like murmur in the tree, a lament—an eerie speech'—spelling her early death. The poem is noteworthy for its sombre images, and possesses a diction indicative of her poetic strength.

Her BAUGMAREE and THE LOTUS are sonnets. The first is an objective piece, describing her garden in France ; while the second is a reflection justifying her choice of the Lotus in preference to the delicious Rose and the pale Lily that competed for her selection. The Lotus she prefers because it has all the qualities of the other two, and made 'the queenliest flower'—symbolic of Indian culture—a synthesis, as it were, of all other cultures.

* * * *

Nature to Toru Dutt was but an aid, and an essential aid, for the depicting of human emotion. The description of the twilight-hour in

The twilight and a crescent moon
Change all asperities of shape
And tone all colors down
With a blue veil of silvered crape.

add not a little to the romance of the couple issuing out together into the wood before the fatal hour. The human figures with their thoughts and Nature here coalesce into an eerie indefiniteness. Or, again, the picture of

Herds, and still herds of tame deer
Were feeding in the solitude,
They knew not man, and felt no fear,
And heeded not his neighbourhood.
Some young ones came close with large eyes and sweet
Came close, and rubbed their foreheads smooth
Against his arms, and licked his feet,
As if they wished his cares to soothe.

in BUTTOO—all these bespeak of that close association which ever exist between Man and Nature for their mutual benefit. So Toru's love of Nature for her own sake, as some critics have observed, does not exist. Nature was, therefore, no independent passion with her as it was with James Thomson, Keats, and Wordsworth in his early years. It had no distinct entity apart from Man, though she very often softened his emotions and sweetened his existence. In this connection what better lines can be cited than those in THE CASUARINA TREE, and the following lines by Buttoo, when he refers to the animate and the inanimate dwellers in the forest :

They have no pride of caste like men,
They shrink not from the hunter-boy,
Should not my home be with them then ?
I shall learn
From beast, and fish, and bird with wings,
And rock, and stream, and trees, and fern.

To the Hindu temperament that is idealistic, Toru Dutt's name must ever remain green; for she has distilled maxims of human conduct from the thought regions of Vedic and Upanishadic lore. She has grown legendary, too, like her Casuarina Tree, that withstood all the cramping influences, and marched to her doom with the gusto of Prahlad, 'erect and stately as a palm.' The pale Lily with her 'Juno mien,' and the Rose with her glamorous red, symbolic of cultures other than her own—did not satisfy her entire. She craved for a synthesis symbolised by her Lotus, that is beloved of all gods and men. Though she did not live up to an age to realise the various trials of womanhood, she was certainly aged enough in her imagination to realise that Savitri was its best type.

Prayer During the Battle

BY M. GOVIND PAI

Theodor Körner's (1791—1813) *Gebet während der Schlacht*
translated (from the German) in the original metre.

Father, I call on Thee !
Roaring the cannon enclouds me in steam,
Sparkling near me writhes and rattles the gleam
Marshal of battles, I call on Thee !
Father Thou, lead me !
Father Thou, lead me !
Lead me to victory, or lead me to death !
Lord, I perceive Thy behests in Thy breath !
Lord, as Thou wilt, e'en so lead me !
God, I perceive Thee !
God, I perceive Thee !
As in the leaves rustling at harvest-tide,
So in the thunderstorm of battles wide,
Well of compassion, I perceive Thee !
Father Thou, bless me !
Father Thou, bless me !
My life I commit to the will of Heaven,
Thou canst it take, for Thou hast it given ;
To life or to death, Father, bless me !
Father, I praise Thee !
Father, I praise Thee !
'Tis no strife for the earth's goods to contend,
We with our swords our holiest defend ;
Then falling or winning, I praise Thee !
God, to Thee I yield me !
God, to Thee I yield me !
When me the thunder-claps of death will greet,
And when my veins open and life will fleet,
To Thee, my God, to Thee I yield me !
Father, I call on Thee !

Human Values

By 'K'

In Lin Yutang's *A Leaf in the Storm* occurs the following passage:

"On that day the newspapers reported that over a hundred persons were killed and a hundred and sixty more were injured. But the mere number of casualties had no meaning. Pin-pin was not even among the casualties. The damage of war is not to be measured in terms of statistics of the number of persons killed and the value of property destroyed. The death of Pin-pin makes war indemnity ridiculous."

Coming as it does at the end of a moving episode, it leaves a deep impression on the reader's mind, though the idea expressed may sound simple and even common-place.

Pin-pin is a young Chinese girl suffering from tuberculosis, and is a refugee in Hankow. Her father, who has already suffered bereavement, is anxious to do everything to save her. The refugee camp in Hankow had become overcrowded, and this family was removed to a vacant house—which was easily available as it was considered to be haunted. The family was under the care of Lao Peng—a noble character whose life of dedicated service and whose equanimity and wisdom provide a background to Lin Yutang's intensely human story. Tanni, the heroine in the novel, a girl 'with a past' who is assisting Lao Peng in his humanitarian work, is providing for the comforts of the refugee family. Pin-pin is getting worse, and Tanni arranges for an injection to be given to her costing twenty dollars. Pin-pin shows signs of recovery. At this time there is an air-raid on Hankow—a splinter strikes the house where Pin-pin lives and, to avoid further danger, she is carried to a safer quarter. But the shock proves too much for her. She vomits blood and, as soon as she is moved back, she worsens and dies.

After describing the circumstances of Pin-pin's death, Lin Yutang makes the observation quoted above.

How moving and human the experiences of men and women—how cold and callous the 'official' report of such events! People read casualty lists, and accounts of losses so constantly in newspapers that their significance in terms of *human* misery ceases to make its due appeal and blunts the sensibility of most persons living in the midst of war. The

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human value is borne in only on those who have the misfortune to lose their own near and dear ones. So far as others are concerned, the news is passed over without even the customary shrug of the shoulder—or the twitch of a muscle, either in the face or about the heart. And, yet, the true import of every such record of casualty is the misery that is caused to scores, possibly to hundreds and thousands, of human beings like ourselves.

This is not a grievance against 'official' reports. The exigencies of time and space and the impersonal character of official authority make it necessary that such reports should be devoid of colour or embellishment of any kind.

And other reports, too, even from non-official agencies, take the cue from and partake of the same neutral character. Otherwise they run the risk of becoming suspect. So custom has ordained in modern time that while setting forth facts and figures objectively the presentation should be as passionless as possible.

A taste for statistics is a trait of the modern age. Departments of Government compile and publish them year after year—and much of the work of 'bureaucracy' is calling for figures and more figures and dressing them up for reports. And once in ten years there is that 'variorum' edition called the Census Report with its interminable tables. Students of economics and conscientious publicists (following the illustrious examples of the late Sir Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale) revel in statistics in Councils and Assemblies. And, yet, there lurks in the background the fear of the common man who looks upon the conclusions of statistical experts with more than mere suspicion, for has it not been said, "There are three kinds of lies: black lies, white lies and statistics"?

In the early days of Gandhiji's return to India after his South African life, he was invited everywhere and patronised by all and sundry. Gandhiji, of course, was modest to a fault, embarrassingly truthful and disclaimed even passable acquaintance with learned matters. The Economic Conference took it into its head to invite him. Blissfully ignorant of the recondite speculations of the economists and indifferent to the controversies regarding the average income of an Indian and numerous other matters, he naively declared that irrespective of whatever economic investigators might say, he was convinced of the enormous poverty of India. In his wide travels, over practically every province in the country, he had not met

one cheerful face, or seen a bright pair of eyes among the middle and poorer classes of our population. This personal observation and inference were conclusive so far as Gandhiji was concerned, more convincing than any mass of figures collected by investigators. By taking up this attitude Gandhiji was perhaps turning away from the inductive method of arriving at truth, so dear to the scientist; but then truth directly apprehended has a validity that cannot be shaken even by the contrary conclusions which learned investigation of details might suggest. Against human vision, much of this will be learned lumber.

The human approach to figures seems greatly needed at the present time when figures are flaunted on every conceivable problem and at every turn. They seem to be sometimes pursued for their own sake as though they exercised a fascination of their own, and presented in cold setting with every show of great work accomplished. But such figures are no more than lifeless symbols which conceal behind them moving facts in the shape of human joy and misery; but it is these that are often passed over. The compiling of figures can never be after all more than merely a means to an end. Was it not in reference to such sophistry, into which mankind seems to be able to slide so easily, that Jesus uttered the wholesome warning: "Sabbath is made for man and not man for the sabbath"?

The Dawn

KALIPADA MUKHERJEE

(Translated from the original Bengali poem by the Author)

Those who are in tears to-day, shall again be in joy.

Lord God shall fill their mouth with laughing,
and their tongue with sweet singing.

That they pass these dismal nights sitting up, will not be in vain.
For the hearts that are drooping to-day from grief, shall again be
freshened with the sprinkling of nectar.

The rule of the wicked is not for long on the righteous.
The Lord with His own hands shall wield the sceptre,
and shall make them fair and free again on the coming of
His own morn.

To-day, towards that great dawn people look, and wait for it with
tears in their eyes.

Some Similes of Kalidasa

BY P. MAHADEVAN

Although Kalidasa has been the touchstone of our national literary taste for well nigh two thousand years, it cannot be said* that Indian scholarship has made any sustained attempt to consider his genius against the background of a universal poetic tradition that would include along with Valmiki, Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton. The best work on our national poet has been done by foreigners; but even they have not entirely been free from more or less faint suggestions of patronage. It is, however, a remarkable fact that his poetry has a power of suggestive anticipation of many of the felicities which have subsequently found varied expression in later poets of recognised universal appeal.

We of the present generation of English-educated Indians have been speaking with amorphous enthusiasm of a renaissance of our literatures, thanks to our contact with the West through its books. We have played—some of us are still playing—the sedulous ape to our distant exemplars, actuated by a mystic faith that thereby the rock would burst, and the waters of inspiration gush forth in an unfailing stream. Our zeal as proselytes has been unquestionable, but we have made no progress beyond the gates. For all practical purposes, we have fallen between two stools—aliens at home and ignored abroad; and that sterility is the badge of our tribe. A few of us have achieved the ambiguous distinction of an exotic flowering; but the blossoms have no fragrance, and their colours look blighted by a congenital anaemia. We have imitators of the latest school of English poets, but not many to pay homage to the greatness of Kalidasa. We have not even managed to give the world one edition of his works in English which is at once scholarly, simple, elegant and readable. Without some such renovation of our classics, I do not know how a renaissance, in the accepted sense of the term, can be expected to be brought about.

It is with a view to show that a study of our ancient Indian classics in the modern setting is very much worth while that I have ventured to draw attention to some of the many similarities in idea or imagery between the poetry of Kalidasa, on the one hand, and the poetry of English poets, on the other. I am too acutely conscious of my limitations to attempt

* Based on an address delivered under the auspices of the Madras Sanskrit Academy—Kalidasa Day on 7-10-43.

anything but an exploration of the outermost fringe of the subject. I feel tempted to exclaim with the poet:

कसूर्यप्रभवो वंशः क चात्पविषया मतिः (Raghuvamsa: I—2)

applying the *mot* not to the resplendent race of the Raghus, but to the poet himself as one of the authentic children of the god of light, who is elsewhere celebrated as the god of song also. But my excuse is that poets form a world-brotherhood who recognise no frontiers. To love any one of them is to love them all. I see him, as it were, through a glass darkly; but it is my hope that others better equipped than myself might do adequate justice to the point of view which I commend to their acceptance. Like the merry Grecian coaster, I shall skip from island to neighbouring island. The sedate scholar, like the grave Tyrian trader, carrying his much more precious cargo, need not avert his face from me, but even tolerate me as one of the light-hearted mariners of the waves whose frail craft is unseaworthy, and who has no intention of disputing with him the mastery of the ocean.

II

The antiquity of the simile may be said to be co-eval with that of poetry itself. Indeed, when the first simile was thought of, poetry may be said to have been born. Its function has ever been to clarify, emphasise or embellish thought through speech. It is the spontaneous expression of the wonder of the unfolding mind trying to be at home in the world, to organise its impressions of it, and evolve out of them patterns of feeling, thought or action. It is the parent of all figures of speech, all *alankaras*, which are at the root of the basic distinction between prose and verse. The metaphor implies it, hyperbole exaggerates it, fallacy transfers it, allusion equates it, while suggestion, reminiscence, echo or flavour are like clouds of glory trailing round it. Alliteration exploits it first through sound, and then proceeds to sense through puns. The dispraise of puns in the English literary tradition has always seemed to me a piece of critical obscurantism. It is, I feel, an indirect confession of the difficulty of managing them. But the greatest poets have always delighted in it; and our Dandin puts it in the forefront of the qualities which distinguish Kalidasa's poetry:

शेषः प्रसाधः समता माधुर्यं सुकुमारता

a judgement which, for its bland perspicacity, might have won Horace's approval or roused Pope's envy. Shakespeare revelled in it both in his gay and grave moments, and remains without a fellow in English literature.

SOME SIMILES OF KALIDASA

Therefore, to consider poetry abstracted from the simile is to attempt to think of *vāk* independently of the *artha*.

All similes can be considered under one of two heads—the universal and the particular. The same symbols may have different significations to different people, or the same ideas be conveyed by different symbols at different times and places. The limiting factors are provided by the accidents of race, geography, history, flora and fauna. The apprehension of beauty has ever been subjective, but must needs convey itself through objective symbols. A given frame of mind or phase of thought colours what is seen so variously as to give us all the *rasas* according to the context. The scope of Kalidasa's similes embraces the entire gamut of life, and he plays infinite variations on it. Nature and human nature, art and the inexhaustible treasures of a mythology, which is still a reality deep down in the consciousness of our race, invest his poetry with the light that never was on sea or land.

It is worthy of note that one kind of simile, the epic or Homeric, is conspicuous by its absence from Samskrit poetry. Instead, we have complete parallelisms which may be described as the logical consummation of the epic simile. The charm of the latter arises, as we know, from its naivete; but it is also an indication that the poet loses the thread of his narrative with the inconsequence of a child attempting to tell a story. In Valmiki, similes flash out in single words or brief phrases that illumine, without interrupting, the narrative. Complete parallelisms represent a more conscious, or self-conscious, stage in which the poet stands out of his theme, and distils the essence of it from all points of view. I shall not presume to determine the rival claims of the two kinds of simile, but shall content myself with the safe remark that much might be said on both sides.

III

Most of us are familiar with the famous description of a cloud
that's dragonish,

- A vapour sometimes like a bear or lion,
Sometimes a tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,
A forked mountain or blue promontory . . .
(*Antony and Cleopatra*.)

—impressive and realistic at the same time, and within the observation of all of us. Shakespeare's cloud is static, is really and objectively a cloud. But Kalidasa sees in it the animated shapes of majestic elephants disporting themselves in their forest homes on the slopes of mountains.

आषाढस्य प्रथमदिवसे मेघमाश्रिष्टसानुं

वप्रक्रीडापरिणतगजप्रेक्षणीयं ददर्श

(*Meghadūta*: I—2)

The justice of the comparison cannot be fully appreciated by those who have neither our mountains, nor our clouds nor our elephants. Mr. Eliot has given us in his *Prufrock* a vigorous description of the antics of the London fog by seeing in it the movements of a cat:

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

—as complete in its own way, and more meticulously minute as befits our modern scientific temper! We are told that Mr. Eliot is a student of Samskrit; and it would be interesting to know if he was aware of Kalidasa's simile when he achieved the above *tour de force*.

Milton speaks of a 'sable cloud that turns forth her silver lining on the night.' Kalidasa goes to the goldsmith for a similar comparison:

सूचिभेदैस्तमोभिः, सौदामन्या कनकनिकषस्त्वग्या दर्शयोर्वी

(*Meghadūta* : I—37)

Keats speaks of the beadsman's prayers going up 'in a frosted breath like incense.' Rossetti speaks of *hearing* the tears that fell from the eyes of the 'blessed damozel.' But I do not think there is in English poetry such a bold conceit as Kalidasa's

राशीभूतः प्रतिदिनमिव त्र्यम्बकस्याद्वाहासः (*Meghadūta* : I—58)

Siva's laughter congealed into the snowy peaks of the Himalayas must be deemed *sui generis*.

Longfellow says:

In the infinite meadows of Heaven
Blossomed the lovely stars—
The forget-me-nots of angels . . .

Kalidasa says:

ज्योतिरश्चायाकुसुमरचितान्युत्तमस्त्रीसहायाः (*Meghadūta* : II—3)

Coleridge's description of the 'ancient mariner' becalmed in the tropical seas—as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean—has been justly famed for its simple felicity. It is apparently a favourite idea with Kalidasa, for he presses it into service on a variety of occasions. I shall choose one which happens to furnish an example of the fusion of the painter in the poet. Dilipa is guarding the sacred cow on the slopes of the Himalayas; suddenly, he hears the roar of a lion as it springs on the

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helpless, cow, his charge. But as he prepares to rescue the victim, he is overpowered by a mysterious inhibition which the poet thus describes :

वामेतरस्तस्य करः प्रहर्तुर्नेत्रप्रभाभूषित कङ्कपत्रे ।
सक्ताङ्गुलिः सायकपुङ्ग एव चित्रार्पितारस्म इवावतस्थे ॥

(Raghuvamśa : II—31)

The phrase 'a baptism of fire' has become trite by repetition; but Kalidasa anticipated the phrase in describing the prowess of Raghu :

द्विषां विषद्वा काकुत्स्थस्तत्र नाराचदुर्दिनम् ।
सन्मङ्गलस्नात इव प्रतिपेदे जयश्रियम् (Raghuvamśa : IV—41)

Indra beseeches the Supreme Being with all his thousand eyes 'like a collection of lotuses shaken by the gentle breeze.' The synchronising of the action suggests Wordsworth's picture of the dancing daffodils waving in the breeze. Wordsworth's description of flocks in their groups 'forty feeding like one' is another instance in point. Kalidasa speaks of

कन्यामये नेत्रशतैकलक्ष्ये

Shelley's description of the love of the moth for the star is appropriate to Kāma in the act of aiming his floral shaft at Brahma himself :

कामस्तु ब्राणावसरं प्रतीक्ष्य पतङ्गवद्विमुखं विविष्टः

(Kumārasambhava : III—64)

Said an English poet :

Ye meaner beauties of the night
That poorly satisfy our eyes,
More by your number than by your light,
You common people of the skies,
What are you when the moon shall rise ?

Kalidasa puts it more succinctly thus :

नक्षत्रताराप्रहसंकुलापि ज्योतिष्मतीचन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः

(Raghuvamśa : 6—22)

In a famous simile drawn from the current at the Straits of Dardanelles, Othello speaks of the icy and compulsive course of his revenge. The glamour of that passage is not in its geography, which is not perhaps scientifically accurate, but in the emotion of the speaker. But Kalidasa speaks of the course of a river blocked by a mountain, and making a retrograde motion like the planets themselves :

अम्भसामोघसंरोधः प्रतीपगमनादिव (Kumārasambhava : II—25)

Similarly, Milton's description of Vallambrossa 'thick-strewn with leaves in autumn'—a description derived from hearsay, I believe—cannot, to the Indian mind at least, have the same suggestiveness as Kalidasa' picture of the Ganga over-crowded with flocks of swans in autumn.

Keats describes the sleeping Madeline as resembling a rose that has shut and become a bud again. Kalidasa has many instances of a similar description of the lotus by day and by night. It is the bright day that brings forth the adder; Kalidasa warns that in clear lakes crocodiles may be hidden from view:

राघवः प्रसन्ना इव गढनक्राः (Raghuvamsa : VII—30)

The figure of the fly buried in amber goes back to classical times. Lamenting over the dead Indumati, the bereaved husband says:

निशि सुप्तमिवैकपङ्कजं विरताभ्यन्तरषट्पदस्वनम्

(Raghuvamsa: VIII—55)

She is further described as

राघुवंशम् ॥ ४२ ॥

which recalls Coleridge's 'horned moon with one bright star at the nether tip.'

The mystic power of the human eye has been recognised in the earliest works of our poets. Love at first sight is, I am inclined to think, one of our ideas which has made a westward migration. We have a reference to *Tara-maitri* in our *Grihyasutras*. Two of the loveliest Elizabethan lyrics celebrate the power of the eye in love: "Drink to me with chine eyes," and "Tell me where is fancy bred." Kalidasa has the same idea:

मन्यते स्म पिबतां विलोचनैः पक्षमपातमपि वंचनां मनः

(Raghuvamsa: XI-36)

where he describes the loving greetings of the citizens to Rama returning from his exile. Shakespeare's 'cloud-capp'd towers' is an echo of

प्रासादमञ्चलिहमारुरोह

(Raghuvamsa: XIV-29)

Coleridge's description of lightning in the *Ancient Mariner* is paralleled by

खद्योताली विलसितनिभां विद्युदुन्मेषदृष्टिम्

(Meghadūta : II-18)

where it appears like the glitter of a row of fire-flies.

Shakespeare's description of the Dover cliffs has many counterparts in the aerial view of the earth, the most famous of them being also the most elaborate:

द्वायापथेनेव शरत्प्रसन्नमाकाशमाविष्कृतचारुतारम्

(Raghuvamsa: XIII-2)

The reduction of scale combined with the preservation of proportion is extraordinarily vivid. Darkness is like

दिवाकराद्रक्षति यो गुहासु लीनं दिवाभीतमिवान्धकारम्

(Kumārasambhava: I-12)

a night-bird dwelling in a cave like Milton's Melancholy.

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It is a convention of our poetry that the ocean is full of submarine fire as the mountains are full of precious gems. Coleridge is the only poet who has described the phosphorescence of under-sea life in picturesque terms. Kalidasa does not particularise, but he refers to the phenomenon when he says:

शापं धर्ज्जवलनमौर्व मिवाम्बुराशिः (Raghuvamsa : IX—82)

Shakespeare speaks of the one dram of evil that o'erspreads all. Kalidasa says:

पौरेषु सोऽहं बहुलीभवन्तमपां तरंगेष्विव तैलविन्दुम्

(Raghuvamsa : XIV—38)

Infamy is like a drop of oil diffusing itself on waves of water.

One of the epic similes of Milton describes Galileo at work with his new wonder, the telescope. Kalidasa describes the lens and its properties with equal accuracy and appositeness:

ज्योतिरिन्धननिपाति भास्करात्सूर्यकान्त इव ताढकान्तकः

(Raghuvamsa : XI—21)

Byron exulted that Freedom's banner though torn will still stream *against* the wind. Kalidasa has not only observed this small detail of waving banners, but goes one better by recording the fact that they are motionless on account of the motion of the chariot :

पत्रेण वेगनिष्कम्पेतुना (Raghuvamsa : XV—48)

Macbeth is hailed as Bellona's bridegroom—a description that has led to much discussion as to its propriety. Kalidasa makes no bones about it. He makes the goddess of victory a captive to be brought back in triumph by Indra :

गोप्तारं सुरसैन्यानां यं पुरस्कृत्य गोत्रभित् ।

प्रत्यानेष्यति शत्रुभ्यो बन्दीमिव जयश्रियम् ॥

(Kumārasambhava : II—32)

Of sustained descriptions, one of the most delicate is that which occurs in Canto IX of the *Kumārasambhava* of Agni in the shape of a dove. For vigour and verisimilitude, it recalls Shakespeare's description of the hounds of Sparta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or of the dew-lapped bulls in *Venus and Adonis*. The passage is too long to be quoted here; but to those who know it and do not know Shakespeare, or rather *vice versa*, the comparison is worth special study.

IV

I have till now dealt with only those passages for which there seemed directly or indirectly counter-parts in the poets of the West. My

object in doing so has not been to plead for the consideration of Kalidasa as a poet, but rather to show that in the whispering gallery of time, voices are recaptured again and again, but so as with a difference, proving conclusively how poets are of one breed, and how they react to their inspiration in almost identical ways.

But there are other similes of Kalidasa for which there cannot be parallels elsewhere. There is a residuum of uniqueness in every poet, which gives him his character and individuality. There is a whole series of figures in which Kalidasa deals with the invisible world, immaterial and imponderable values. These can have a meaning only in their contexts, and have to be studied with them. But even of the purely imaginative quality of poetry, there is much that cannot be translated without loss of the original bouquet. Such felicities as

मधुकरश्रेणीर्घान्कटाक्षान् (Meghadūta : II—35)

are delightful snapshots of life and nature. An English critic has tried to make out that the idea of the side-glance of a maiden suggesting a string of bees in a long line is a familiar one. But truth is that the maiden's glances are described, and bees are described separately; the peculiar combination of the two is found only in Kalidasa.

Of similes which appeal to us as Indians, I shall venture to mention a few before I conclude. In *Sākuntala*, there is a famous description of a sense of joy tempered by memories of previous births:

रस्याणि वीक्ष्य (Sākuntala : Act V)

The same idea is found in a variant form in

प्रपेदिरप्राक्तनजन्मविद्या: (Kumārasambhava : I—30)

Shelley came nearest to the idea in his *Ode to a Skylark* where he speaks of 'our sincerest laughter' being fraught with some pain and our sweetest songs being those that tell of saddest thought. He, however, does not account for the phenomenon as Kalidasa has done. The poetic use of memories in their philosophical implications has been but slightly touched upon by Vaughan in his *Retreat* and Wordsworth in his *Intimation Ode*. It is not without significance that the idea is found more pervasively in the work of many modern, living poets.

Kalidasa epitomises the Vamanāvatāra thus:

श्यामः पादोबलिनियमनाभ्युद्यतस्येव विष्णोः (Meghadūta : I—57)

A woman who looses her tresses twined with strings of pearls:

मुक्ताजालमधितमलकं कामिनीवाभ्रवृन्दम् (Meghadūta : I—63)

SOME SIMILES OF KALIDASA

Indumati's progress through the hall of Swayamvara:

ससीरणोत्थेव तरंगलेखा पद्मन्तरं मानसराजहंसीम्

(Raghuvamsa : VI—26)

One of the crispest utterances of Kalidasa is in the description of the abdication of Raghu:

न तु सर्प इव त्वचं पुनः प्रतिपेदे व्यपवर्जितां श्रियम् ॥

(Raghuvamsa : VIII—13)

Incidentally, it is the final answer to those who have felt dissatisfied with Shakespeare's killing of Lear, and who have sought to re-translate him to the throne.

The monkeys going in search of Sita are compared to the distracted thoughts of Rama himself:

इतस्ततश्च वैदेहीमन्वेष्टु भर्तृचोदिताः । कपय इच्छरात्स्य रामस्येवमनोरथः

(Raghuvamsa : XII—59)

It is also a peculiar feature of Kalidasa's poetry that he presses into service much valuable scientific lore in the guise of mythological symbols. Thus the moon plays a very prominent part in his descriptions; it is more than stage property, it is the lord of the ocean, of herbs and of the thoughts of men. The comparison of rivers to maidens is conventional enough; but Kalidasa gives it a fresh grace, a tremulous charm by helping us to see the woman in the river. The ripple of water is like the knitting of a beautiful maiden's eye-brow; the eddies formed in a stream are

संसर्पन्त्याः स्खललितसुभगं दर्शितावर्तनाभेः (Meghadūta . I—28)

My main aim has been to set Kalidasa amidst his peers from the point of view of one of the easiest tests that can be applied to any poet. May I say how refreshing, modern and urbane is the personality of this man who speaks to us through a gap of time which has witnessed the rise and fall of half a dozen empires and cultures! He saw life steadily, saw it whole and preserved, withal, a divine sense of proportion. He had no inhibitions, no frustrations and lived in the light of a thought which has perennial vitality. I do not know how else we are to renew the springs of our life than by bringing home to our generation the treasures of his mind and spirit with all the strength of our awakened zeal.

In the 'Plane

BY BALAMANI AMMA

(Rendered by the author from her Malayalam poem, "Vimānathil")

The 'plane wreathes and screams frantically,
Struggling to liberate itself from the earth.

With vast fields of paddy still green,
Rose-bushes all in bloom,
With crystal fountains mirroring the celestial flights,
Glistens multi-hued the world I am to leave behind.

The earth that seemed so firm and harmonious,
Staggers suddenly, whirls and turns chaotic.
The myriad-temptationed one
Recedes from me in terrific speed.

The clouds obstructing my path
Scatter and melt away.
Now they seem to me as flags
Hoisted in triumph by the hosts of subterranean darkness,
Not as flimsy curtains
Swaying over the portal of paradise.

Away ! Ye vapours !
Man must subdue even the utmost heights,
Man, the invincible, whose unfailing labours turned
The infernal abysses into mines of fabulous wealth ;
Man whose will, pulling its flexible cord,
Makes space and time dance as puppets !

As I soar higher and higher
The breath of mortality grows thinner and thinner.
Far below, shadow-like, lies the earth,
Unattractive, faded and insignificant.
Gradually the senses begin to swoon
And body seems lighter
Millions of lights flit around.
Are they not flowers the vanquished earth worships me with ?
All colours being melted,
Infinity looms like a mighty ocean ;
And into that crystalline glory
My beatified soul merges.

IN THE 'PLANE

Alas ! Futile is this striving of mine.
The top of the miraculous throne is still distant from me.
Countless are the steps yet to be climbed.
How could this mould of clay,
With life getting extinguished as its earthliness is subdued,
Urge this machine on ?
Undirected it might fall
And shatter to pieces.

Oh ! How transient is the sojourn
On those sacred heights !
How unconquerable is the attraction of dust !

Smiling with uplifted hands
The earth hails my descending 'plane :
Welcome ! O Victor ! back to my breast
Whereon repose self-defeated,
They who waged war on the elements.

Question Across The Field

P. R. KAIKINI

(*From a Konkani Song*)

Long have I waited
My fond love,
Hundreds of miles
Have I heavily trodden
And three fine summers
Have I passed
On alien lands
Thinking of you, my love.

To-night I lie
In the open field ;
With a sheet of stars about me,
A loving caress of the blue,
A wail of people
In the ditches,
A pageant of fire and smoke,
A shower of man-made lightning,
Deadening thunder
More potent than God's.

How will you kiss me to-night,
My love,
Across the crimson horizon ?
How will you lull me to bed,
My love,
To an everlasting dreamless sleep ?

Short Stories from Kannada*

BY K. S.

"The Poetry of Valmiki" gave us glimpses of the depth and fineness of Mr. Venkatesa Iyengar's culture and the renderings of his Kannada stories which appeared in *Triveni* provided a measure of the greatness of Mr. Iyengar as a creative artist. But the publication of these thirty two stories, in their bulk and variety, has given us an entirely new vision of the ripe wisdom and massive creative power of this great man. There are many Indian short-story writers who have produced one or two masterpieces in this difficult modern art. But we believe there is no one in India to-day who may be compared with Masti for the naturalness and ease with which he can express in this form the best in himself and his people, the very contour and climate of a complex culture.

Perhaps the chief difference between a grandmother's tale and a modern short story arises from the far greater importance attached in the latter to realism of character and atmosphere. The two possible extremes of the kind are well represented in this collection by *The Shah Abbas* stories at one end and by *Ugrappa's New Year Day* at the other end. The two stories on the justice of the Muslim ruler are magnificently self-sustained narratives in which the stream-line effect depends entirely upon the events and their co-ordination, and the speed and continuity of narration are matched by the stern suppression of comment or moral. *Ugrappa's New Year Day* is a leaf from a villager's diary which has the incoherent excitement and complex, haphazard, eddying confusion of actual history.

From the storied past of South India are derived the heroic tales of self-sacrifice, *The Queen of Nijagal* and *The Krishna Idol of Penukonda*, as also the even more heroic tale of *The Pandit's Will and Testament*, an illustration of the selfless objectivity that comes from our wide, deep, impersonal traditional learning.

The three Rangappa stories—his *Marriage*, *Deepavali* and *Courtship*—are social comedies of rustic life, looked at through the twinkling, humorous eyes of a village elder, acquainted with modern education and himself romantically inclined.

My Teacher and *The Curds Seller* are sympathetic pictures of human relations in Hindu families, where deep love and tolerance flow as a steady undercurrent beneath the froth and foam of strife.

* SHORT STORIES in four volumes—By Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, with a foreword by Sri C. Rajagopalachariar. (The Author, Gavipur Extension, Basavangudi, Bangalore.) Price Rs. 2.10 a volume.

SHORT STORIES FROM KANNADA

The Kalmadi Buffalo and *The Judgment Here*, to be contrasted with *A Letter of The Abbe Dubois*, illustrate different methods of approaching and studying "pagan" psychology.

Was it Indira? and *Lakshamma of Melur* are delicate studies in abnormal psychology, the one passing and the other settled. In *A Story of The Holi Feast* a village superstition receives an unexpected confirmation. *Venkata Rao's Ghost* and *A Malnad Ghost* treat of the supernatural from two entirely different angles and make the flesh creep in spite of rational explanations and recantations of belief.

Subedar in Danger and *Jogy Anjappa's Fowl* are clever and amusing police cases of very different degrees of criminality.

Krishnamurti's Wife, *Rangasami's Folly*, *Venkatasami's Love* and *That Woman*, all strike a modern note and they all skate, at some point or other, on thin ice. But the lurking danger of unpleasant lapses is avoided by consummate tact of narration and by a hard consistent realism. The placid surface of the social waters closes irrevocably over the transient bubble of sentiment. The stately banyan grows where Venkatasami and his romance lie buried and *That Woman* is still *that woman*.

The Return of Sakuntala and *The Last Day of a Poet's Life* are exquisite literary reconstructions, perhaps recreations, which testify to the author's loving familiarity with Kalidasa and Goethe.

An Old Story is a great achievement in its kind, and with *Another Old Story*, *Sri Ramanuja's Wife* and *The Last Days of Sariputra*, forms a class of prose poems which we in India at once recognise to be true to life in every detail, but which foreign critics would no doubt set down as far-fetched and impossible.

Vying for first rank with *An Old Story*, more complex but less firm in its structure is *Masumatti* (rendered by Rajaji as 'Venuganam'), an allegorical masterpiece on the power of music and on the power of surviving form to recapture the departed spirit.

Other classifications are equally possible, but it would be impossible by comment, extract, summary or sub-division to illustrate the happy ease and many-sidedness of Masti's genius. His approach and treatment, his construction, characterisation and style, not only vary from theme to theme but they fit each theme with the healthy, pleasant appropriateness of a natural organic growth. Again and again, as one reads these tales, one remembering their initial similarity with those of other Indian writers, one trembles with anxiety for the next step. One expects a false note, a wrong

turn of sentiment, an *ersatz* event; but every time one is pleasantly disappointed and the pitfalls which have betrayed so many other Indian short-story writers are avoided by Masti by the simple old device of viewing our life as in itself it is really lived, without pride or shame and without any advertence to the possible reactions of the "foreign critic" or the "modern reader". Such artistic strength, such sublime confidence comes to the man who knows and loves his people and accepts their ways of living and thinking and feeling, without complaint or protest or irritable anxiety to reform. In the result we have in all these stories, and pervading each from beginning to end, a classical quality which is healthy, natural and completely satisfying. The richness and variety, the form, colour and texture, are not the result of effort. They have come as the light freshness of leaves, as the softness and fragrance of flowers, as the slow-maturing ripeness of good fruit; and they represent a perfection attainable not by any sudden magic gift or the hard mechanical labour of an hour, but the slow mellowing fulfilment of a long, calm growth through many seasons of sun and rain. The comparison with trees is indeed inevitable for work of this slow and satisfying quality. Our only comment as we finish story after story, is that the miracle behind the real mango tree yielding its natural fruit in the fullness of the years, is far more wonderful than the trick of the conjurer, which forces a mango fruit in a few minutes. Masti deals all the time with those delightful, eternal commonplaces which having been, will ever be. His stories have the same rich even texture, the same continuous natural magic, the same prevailing "negative capability", which content us in the best poems of Keats.

Masti's characters live, and they live a normal life. It is this combination of vitality and normality that makes each story in its own historical and geographical setting and social *milieu* a true and convincing picture of South Indian life, indeed of human life in one or other of its aspects. Some one in each tale—often the teller, and the commentator, if not the hero—lives this vivid, intense, sane life and presents the heroic with admiration, the pathetic with pity and the comic with a smile. By his power of sympathetic imagination, the all-comprehending charity which is Brahma's greatest gift to his chosen children, Masti creates for each situation, however coarse or exquisite, however high or low, a set of characters with the *adhibara* to act in it or to contemplate it. He loves them all, but judges none. He succeeds by sheer self-effacement. He sows himself, his opinions and prejudices, and reaps a rich harvest of living men and women.

On Having a Sense of Humour

BY B. VENKATARAMANI

A sense of humour is a virtue, which in a greater or less degree, is present in every one. It should not be very difficult of cultivation to a man who practises the art of impartiality and tries to divest himself of the trammels of the personal.* Experience will tell one that without a sense of humour it is impossible to lead a happy life.

What a great boon it is to possess this quality can be perceived only when one watches those specimens of humanity who are the victims of frequent passionate outbursts that disturb the harmony of their lives. The person who is very sensitive and takes everything seriously is doomed to perpetual conflicts of mind. The world will seem unfair to him, if the path before him is not always strewn with roses. King Lear's life was a tragedy because Lear was a high-strung person, quick to feel hurt and take to heart the words of his daughter who sincerely told him that she would love him next only to her husband. Lear there are many in this world. Such men know not happiness. For they forget the wholesome maxim that "life is a tragedy to one who feels, while it is a comedy to one who thinks."

A sense of humour helps one to attain a balance of mind and prevents prejudices and personal predilections from clouding one's vision. It helps the person to see himself through another's eyes, in a detached manner: he is not therefore cut to the quick when his weaknesses are laughed at by others. How many times do we not fret and fume unnecessarily and make ourselves miserable, when, if only we had humour, we could have overcome such moods of irritation or resentment!

A great lawyer was once heatedly arguing a very important case in Court. He quoted several passages from legal reports in support of his points. Perhaps unusually, some of them turned out to be erroneous. For the Judge grew rather impatient and remarked to the surprise of some in Court and to the secret delight of certain others, "If that is the law, I should burn my law books." "Why not read them, my Lord?", was the sharp reply, which diverted the laughter of the Court against the presiding Judge himself. The Judge's remarks wounded the lawyer's prestige indeed; but his ready sense of humour stood him in good stead and saved him.

Only those who do not take a retort too much to heart and begin nursing it, are capable of fitting and brilliant repartees. One recalls a

famous anecdote from the life of the Earl of Birkenhead which, though familiar, bears repetition. He was a reputed lawyer, renowned for his pointed wit and startling repartees. Once a Judge after having bandied words with him for a good deal of time, lost his patience and decided to finish the impudent lawyer with a decisive retort. "Mr. Smith," he said "have you ever heard of a saying by Bacon—the great Bacon—that youth and discretion are ill-wedded companions?"

"Yes, I have," came the instant rejoinder, "and have you ever heard of a saying by Bacon—the great Bacon—that a much-talking Judge is like an ill-tuned cymbal?"

"You are extremely offensive, young man," exclaimed the Judge. "As a matter of fact," said Smith "We both are; but I am trying to be and you can't help it."

"What do you think I am on the Bench for?" cried the Judge boiling all over.

"It is not for me, your Honour, to attempt to fathom the inscrutable workings of Providence," came the calm and smiling reply.

If a sense of humour, which implies a sense of proportion, would result in the owner cultivating mental equipoise under stress and strain it becomes a blessing indeed. We often hear people saying of certain persons that they are not much affected by sorrow. We suppose, in such instances, that the persons spoken of possess great mental balance. It is not that they are incapable of fine emotions and are merely callous to suffering; they realize the proper values of life, that our existence is but a fleeting drama and there is no use weeping ourselves sore over what is beyond remedy. To them life itself is a huge comedy of errors and man a 'playboy'.

This does not mean that a person with humour should be insensitive to suffering; for sensitiveness is the quality that differentiates man from the brute, the cultured man from the barbarian. But oversensitivity and sentimentalism he abjures and has the happy blending of other qualities that make him take life as it is with good cheer. His mental poise is perfect and his views are generally free from passion. He does not worry himself about a thing quite out of proportion to the importance of the occasion. It is his sense of humour that helps him out of many awkward situations and soothes him in many afflicted moments.

If one is asked wherein resides the most characteristic virtue of humanity, the answer should be that it is not so much in good works or in the creation of beautiful objects as in possessing a sense of humour.



Dodu and other Stories—By R. K. Narayan, Indian Thought Publications, Lakshmiapuram, Mysore. Price Rs. 1-8-0.

Sri R. K. Narayan has made a name for himself as a writer in English on Indian themes. One therefore takes up this book by him with expectation and is glad not to be disappointed. There are seventeen short pieces in the collection and they deal with very varying themes. Some deal with children, some with unusual characters, others with the weird, and some glance at peculiarities in our social setting, but there is a refreshing variety in the subject matter and a sense of artistic adequacy throughout. The description of Dodu's or Leela's or Seenu's life shows Sri Narayan as a sympathetic student of children and the details are convincing and could come only from first-hand knowledge born of kindly insight and loving observation. This is the case also with Dasi, the half-witted lover of the cinema star. The story of Ranga, who refuses to learn at school and becomes a servant in a shop and loses his master's money by betting in the races and drowns himself in the sea, is something of a jumble as a story, but the character itself is clearly conceived and convincing. The story of Samad, the coachman, who is deprived of his livelihood by the arrival of the motor car is full of detail and all of it is in place. One may question only the incident of the coachman heaving a brick at a bus in dudgeon at its having taken the bread out of his mouth.

This story and the one about the one-armed giant show the easy simplicity and naturalness of a characteristic story by Galsworthy. The story of the father, who gets his prospective son-in-law to look at his daughter by boarding the train in which the young man is travelling, is beautiful, light satire. Those of the poor mother who is rude to her son and feels worried when that son does not appear in the night and goes out and finds him near the tank, and of the poor brothers, Murugan and Kannan, are touching as only the best writing anywhere can be. These stories describe our people like some that Guy de Maupassant has written of his.

Other stories are not equally satisfying. The Talkattve man tells three of these other tales but he does not seem to be one man himself. The ghosts, in the Level-crossing story and in the Old Man of the Temple story are good enough for the stories but give the feeling of being constructed. The story of the magic beard or of the forty-five rupees a month and Gandhi's appeal are merely ideas expanded. The humour of 'Engine Trouble' is rather heavy for Sri Narayan's pen and the refashioning of the tradition regarding the sculptor Jakkanachari is too modernised and facile.

This, however, is merely to say that not all the writing is of the same level but of what book can this be said, unless the level is no level at all? It should also be added that the work even when not at its best is that of a competent artist. Sri Narayan's English has been praised by English people and stands in no need of Indian approval. If, in spite of this, one may presume to say a word or two, the style, so far as an Indian—this Indian—can judge, is mostly good and has an ease and natural flow. If after all this I make a suggestion to Sri Narayan I hope he will not misunderstand me. That suggestion is that he should write in some language of our people. A writer of Sri Narayan's ability does not need to be told that story-telling is not a matter of the language learnt in the class-room but from daily life and almost any reading. This would be accepted as true anywhere but in our unfortunate country. Writing in the country's language, our author would get one of the highest places in our literature. He would please more people and would, to men like me, be also even more convincing than he is, for trying to picture the life described. When I meet sentences like, "You have wisdom, old girl", "I do not need your certificate", "A cuckold's wife is everybody's darling," I catch myself asking how it was said in Kannada or Tamil or Hindustani. Having written originally in an Indian language, Sri Narayan would be welcome to write in English too. Indeed, if he adopts this course he will find that he has said things in the former which are too racy of the soil to go into English, and that, in consequence, his English will seem less successful but will have gone deeper into the heart of things.

MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR.

Marathi Language Course--by H. M. Lambert, M. A., (Cantab), Published by the Oxford University Press, Nicol Road, Bombay. Pages XIV + 301. Price Rs. 10/-.

The names of Rev. J. D. Bate and J. T. Thomson (in Hindi), Charles C. Brown (in Telugu), W. Carey (in Bengali), R. W. Yates and H. H. Wilson (in Sanskrit), Molesworth (in Marathi), Rev. W. Reeve, John Garret and Kittel (in Kannada) are, as western pioneers, still gratefully remembered by people of the respective linguistic provinces for the work done by them during the nineteenth century. Rev. D. L. Edward Fairbanks seems next to have introduced a general application of the "Direct Method" into the teaching of Marathi to foreigners. The author of the present work says that Fairbanks's work inspired her to design the present one with a view to produce quick facility in speech, that is in the use of the forms heard in ordinary Marathi conversation. She has selected "Deshi Marathi" as spoken in the District of Poona as the standard form for this course. The course is divided into two parts. Part I has been planned to give practice in the use of the easier construction of sentences in which the verb and the agent of the verb agree. Part II deals with other constructions that present more difficulty to the English-speaking student.

The author breaks new ground in the employment of a phonetic alphabet developed to suit the language taught in this course. She has added nine modified letters to the English Roman alphabet and hopes that it might perhaps be the basis of a romanised Indian Alphabet. The author seems to be quite conscious of the difference between the style of

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the spoken language and the literary style. So she gives great importance to the learning of the actual spoken language rather than the use of forms usually found in a conventional grammar book or the ordinary book with its standard forms. So in teaching the spoken language, emphasis is placed on correct sounds used in appropriate contexts, involving the training of the ear and the speech organs and the storing up in aural memory of sequence of sounds expressing ideas. The author has taken great pains in trying to avoid complicated grammatical rules to make the course as easy as possible for English-speaking missionaries who intend coming down to India and work in Maharashtra. An elaborate note on the phonetic script, suggestions concerning the methods of using this course for the guidance of teachers and students, explanations of terminologies used in Phonetics form part of the Appendix. In spite of all this we are afraid that English-speaking teachers and students would find it hard to master all the fine variations in quality and length of the sounds that are heard in the spoken languages of India. The adoption of the Balbodha or Nagari script alone seems to be the remedy. It helps the student to learn the alphabets of three languages, viz., Marathi, Hindi and Sanskrit. It helps in learning the correct sounds of other Indian languages like Kannada, Telugu or Malayalam. But the course worked out in this book will serve as a good guide to all English-speaking people to learn spoken Marathi through the phonetic alphabet. To make the alphabet advocated herein more popular, it may be hoped that this course will provide a basis for further publications, such as readers and story books.

D. K. BHARADWAJ.

The Ivory Tower—by S. R. Dongerkery; East and West Book House, Baroda, Price Rs.2/-.

This is a well-got up book of verse written by the author in "moments snatched from a busy life of official routine." Poetry certainly is not a pursuit for such moments. Abundant leisure when the heart is given to deep and intense contemplation of the varied vision of life generally inspires the poetical mood. The mind that has to give the mood its literary garb must needs be equipped with a keen sensitiveness to the majesty of words for, as in other things, there are the nobles and the commons in the realm of words too.

Mr. Dongerkery has composed verses which bear ample testimony to his sensitiveness to the beauties of nature. He is also impelled to make expeditions into the realm of philosophic thought, which invariably runs along the much-trodden path of popular Hindu concepts of love, life and death. In poems like 'Overwhelmed,' "Universal Love" and "Separation," the author has not been able to rise above the commonplace and conventional drabness of mediocre composition. But there are poems like "The Toil of Love" where he redeems himself and surprises the reader with newness and grace of conception and deftness of execution:

I went on plundering Nature's store
And made the moon, the stars, the sun
Their treasures at her feet to pour,
And yet her heart I had not won.

But when my bleeding heart I poured
Before her eyes without a groan
A speechless victory I scored
And she could hold no more her own.

The poems are grouped under three heads Love, Beauty and Truth, which in itself is too much of a conventional classification. There are poems well worth reading such as "Jog Falls," "The Garden Of Brindavan" and "An Unextinguished Spark." The sight of the beautiful and the sublime in nature have an influence on the author that give him the warmth and skill of expression and make a real approach to poetry.

There are two poems included in this collection which are written by the author's wife. They are "Too Late" and "Dual Role," and both deserve great praise for there is great delicacy and freshness of imagery in them. "Dual Role" is addressed to the wind that has its awful as well as its gentle missions to fulfil :

...

Your presence makes the oceans roar,
Their waters dark to whirl,
And boats and ships, on sea, on shore,
Into sad wrecks you hurl.

You softly push the country craft
With cargoes moving slow;
Sweet music on your wings you waft
When you do gently blow.

...

Your real nature puzzles all
Who watch your dual role;
For though you bluster, bluff and bawl
You have a kindly soul.

The book is well-printed on feather-weight paper and the get-up in yellow cover and wrapper with an ivory tower drawn by the same delicate hands as wrote the poem cited above, leave nothing to be desired.

D. RAGHUTHAMACHARYA

"*Indian Horizons*" 1 by H. D. Sethna—Price Re. 1.

"*Tomorrow*" Part I Edited by Raja Rao and Ahmed Ali—Price Rs. 2-8.—Padma Publications, Bombay.

Indian Horizons by H. D. Sethna is the first of a cultural series, aiming at an interpretation of Indian culture. It is a collection of seven essays. The author is convinced that the awakening now witnessed in Indian national life is not a purposeless plunge into chaotic nothing but a renaissance informed with the spirit of religious idealism. Though the essays in the volume were written at varying periods, they have an underlying unity of purpose. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are given their due place in the cultural upheaval, the one as the apostle of love and the other as the messenger of hope. One of the essays deals with the valuable part to be played by literature. An attempt is made to present a philosophical

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interpretation of Satyagraha, but the ideal of "Universal man," probably as taught by Sri Aurobindo, is presented as a higher stage. One feels, however, that the dynamic philosophy of Gandhiji's new way of life, which transforms and elevates the individual into a higher plane of existence, has only been inadequately appraised owing to the author's overstressing of the qualities of humility and sacrifice in Gandhiji's gospel. Nevertheless, Mr. Sethna's deep longing for the re-instatement of spiritual values in Indian life and his keen anxiety to reveal the soul of India to the Western world are evident in the essays.

Tomorrow stands on a different plane altogether. While *Indian Horizons* stands on the bedrock of the religious idealism of the past, for *Tomorrow* the "Past and the Present are illusions." The Editors "stand for the assumption of natural values." The volume before us is a collection of fourteen contributions from eminent writers of different countries.

Andre Gide's "Awaitings" is a brilliant piece of subtle wisdom applicable not only tomorrow but also today. "Gleanings" from Lu-Hsun, the most famous writer of modern China, is a garland of the choicest blossoms. There is fire and frenzy in every line; virility or wisdom in every thought. Vilem Haa's critical account of Franz Kafka's great writing has the power to whet our appetite to taste the original dish. Vatsyayana's "Butterflies" has such an enchanting pathos about its story—if there be any story at all—that one is tempted to learn Hindi to enjoy it in the original. Ismet Chughtais' "Little Mother" is a charming story spilling child-like simplicity from beginning to end. All these are good and enjoyable. But we fail to understand the motive of the Editors in including in this collection such an unpleasant story as the one selected from the pen of the celebrated Russian writer, Mikhail Sholokov. The story with its motto: "You cannot defeat an enemy without having learnt to hate him from the bottom of your heart," may be good propaganda but poor and stultifying philosophy for tomorrow. The few poems chosen have an elusive fragrance and atmosphere about them, especially those from Le Chia.

The Editors deserve to be congratulated on this 'international' publication.

K. S. A.

'The Educational System'—A double pamphlet by K. G. Saiyadain, H. V. Hampton, Amaranath Jha, Ranajit Chetsingh, K. Venkataraman and P. N. Joshi. Price: 12 as. The Oxford University Press. pp. 64.

This is an excellent attempt at setting forth in a nutshell the important problems concerning our educational system for the information and understanding of the layman. Coming from very eminent educationists, the essays give evidence of deep insight born out of experience and present a good perspective. The essays are sure to be of added interest to the general public in the wake of the Sargent Plan and the Bombay Reform in Elementary Education, recently in the news.

All the five essays are delightful reading, especially, the first one on primary education. Mr. Saiyadain's inference and diagnosis are well-founded when he says that the present deplorable state of affairs in

Indian education is due to people's indifference and the administration's hesitation and timidity. He does not set any store by reforms introduced into the present set frame-work. "Reforms (like the Dalton plan and the Project method) have unfortunately failed to revolutionise educational ideology and technique because the piecemeal changes and modifications have been introduced into the set frame-work of the existing system, as though life, which is dynamic and free, could be forced into preconceived, out-worn and unsuitable moulds" (p. 16) Mr. Hampton similarly says (on p. 30): "The whole school syllabus is rigid and inelastic and characterised by a dull and monotonous uniformity," when referring to secondary education. Prof. Amarnath Jha strikes the same note when he says, "Change and reform are signs of vitality." He exhorts the Universities to adapt themselves to changed conditions. "Only a moribund institution can rest on its oars. Circumstances have altered. Old values are challenged." But how far have our universities evinced any interest to adapt themselves to new situations and new values? Mr. Venkataraman, writing on Technical Education, also says: "A feature of our educational system is its rigidity" (p. 59). How all the four writers concur in their diagnoses of the present malady! Thus all the efforts and enthusiasm of reformers are stultified in the face of a dead steel-frame and the hesitation, if not the antipathy, of the administrator and lack of interest on the part of the public. The problem is herculean and needs, in Mr. Saiyadain's words, "an organisation of an enthusiastic educational crusade on a nation-wide basis." This is applicable to all the grades of education.

The chapter on adult education is more a compendium than an original contribution on the subject. The fact that the country woke up to the problem only recently may be as much a reason for the brevity of the treatment as against it. But even as it is, it is instructive.

The Oxford University Press deserves congratulations on bringing out a book on a matter of such vital importance to the land, though in the present scheme of things education "suffers first in times of woe and war and is remembered last in times of weal."

B. S.

Friend of Friend by Sir Colin Garbett. Oxford University Press. Pages 236. Price Rs. 5.

Sir Colin Garbett, a member of the I. C. S., served in the Punjab and elsewhere for over thirty years and relates in this book the lessons of his administrative experience and also many interesting reminiscences and anecdotes. His views about India and its cultural life and background in general erroneous, and highly controversial in places. Dutiful and hardworking, the author claims, and deserves, credit for effecting many improvements in agriculture, sanitation and education; tact and a knowledge of human nature helped him to settle amicably many communal tangles, patch up personal quarrels and secure private charity for public causes.

The dominant motive of the author, however, appears to be to inform the public that there are many cankers in the heart of the lotus which is India and that the British administration of this land is entirely to

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its benefit and therefore indispensable. The Hindu-Moslem question is raised with the pertinacity of a musical refrain throughout this departmental ditty. No claim is made that Government officials have attempted to compose this difference, but the author suggests education as a possible remedy (without reference to the length of time the process may take), as if educated persons are free from communal bias! Sir Colin's conviction is that the Montford Reforms erred on the overgenerous side to India and this foretaste of liberty spoilt the Indians who not merely wanted a second bite of the cherry but aspired for complete independence! It is understandable, the author concedes generously, to parley with friends (this is the justification for the title chosen for the book), but how can any one think of negotiating with the Indian National Congress, a body of seditionists who desire Indian Independence and total severance from British connection? For the patent unwise of such a step, which even caused difficulties in provincial administration, the author blames Lord Irwin who negotiated with the Congress. Title-hunters, place-seekers, lying witnesses and income-tax dodgers are not a tribe by no means peculiar to India but are often met with in the author's native island as well. The fantastic claim is made on behalf of Miss Mayo, the author of *Mother India*, that she came out with the bare truth in her book not to vilify but to tell the Americans that the German propaganda against England was untrue and that backward India most needed Britain's protection and beneficent rule. The author blames a temple bell, which he bought, for the death, disease and disaster which dogged his footsteps as long as he owned it; it is not quite clear if the inference to be drawn from this is that it is dangerous to acquire temple property or that the Indian gods are also wicked! Though it cannot expiate for the other short-comings in the book, the decision to pay the profits to the Red Cross Organisation is a generous gesture for which the author and publishers deserve praise.

C. R. S.

The Tell-tale Picture Gallery—(Occult stories by H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. International Book House Ltd., Bombay Rs. 2)

The two well-known theosophists, W. Q. Judge and Madame Blavatsky, are the authors of the twenty occult stories in this collection. The admixture of fact and fiction in these tales may not be exactly to the liking of those who wish to study in a scientific manner the hidden psychic forces latent in man and understand the unexplained laws of nature which underlie occult phenomena. They may prefer only the facts without their being mixed up with the creative imagination of an artist or author, however eminent. Read purely as stories, the bunch grips the interest of the readers. Madame Blavatsky's language is eloquent and poetical and her graphic descriptions haunt the mind: 'Ensouled Violin' is perhaps the most powerful story, in which a dead master inspires his pupil to play even better than the known best. Mr. Judge's style is as limpid and perspicuous as a crystal stream and equally refreshing: the reader understands him with ease. An explanatory glossary helps the layman to understand occult phraseology.

C. R. S.

The TRIVENI Quarterly

The Bihar Herald—70th Year Souvenir.—Editor: M. C. Samaddar.

The first English weekly to be started in Bihar seventy years ago, *The Bihar Herald* has continued to appear without a break all these years: a proud and enviable record, indeed. The Annual Number contains many interesting contributions from well-known writers. We wish the Journal a long and prosperous career.

C. R. S.

The Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer Shashiyabdhapoorthi Souvenir Volume—The Souvenir is published to commemorate the completion of sixty years by Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, Advocate General of Madras. Besides an interesting biographical sketch, it contains the messages of good will and felicitations received from all over the country. Coming from the pen of so eminent a jurist, the articles, speeches, and addresses published are worth close study. Sir Alladi's is a brilliant example of a self-made career and his munificence to many deserving causes (the 'Triveni' also is among them) no less than his intellectual acumen and forensic abilities have earned for him an honoured place in public esteem and affection.

C. R. S.

Crusade of Free Spirits—by Rt. Hon'ble Alexander Wamwetzos—published by the New Book Company, Bombay.

This book purports to be a draft of peace conditions. The disillusionment suffered by the author both in his own country before War and at the hands of the authorities of the United Nations after War broke out and he consequently became an exile, have not defeated his idealism, while it has been tempered and given a practical orientation. The war aims of the United Nations are generally understood to have been expressed in the Atlantic Charter. The future peace conditions visualised by the author have the Charter as their basis. But the vagueness of the Charter itself and the varied and very often contradictory interpretations that it has received at the hands of those in authority make it a very uncertain foundation. Nevertheless, the author's scheme may be regarded as a valuable contribution to the growing literature on the future of the world by a detached and disinterested student.

The author has visualised the Indian problem as an integral part of the world problem which cannot be finally solved without solving the Indian problem. On the whole, the author takes a fair view of the situation and unhesitatingly comes to the conclusion that those who are in authority in Britain do not wish to give up their hold on India. How difficult it is for a foreigner, however detached he may be, properly to appraise the situation here is demonstrated by the author's endorsement of the view that the Congress, while in office in the Provinces, conducted itself in such a way as to lose the confidence of the minorities. Incidentally, it also reveals how powerful a weapon propaganda can be and how ruthlessly it has been used by the rulers of this land.

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The value of the work is further enhanced by the material that it has incorporated from contemporary records as to the trend of events, as, for example, the Darlan incident.

While there can be no doubt about the author's effort being a laudable one, we are left wondering with him, after the demonstration of French Imperialism in regard to the Lebanon incident, after the exhibition of unabashed racialism in South Africa and after all the experience India has had at the hands of Britain subsequent to the outbreak of the War, whether slogans like Justice, Freedom, Democracy, and Brotherhood, are sincere, whether the United Nations are really fighting for the cause of the weak against the strong, and whether we are, after all, moving towards a better world.

"N"

OXFORD PAMPHLETS ON WORLD AFFAIRS.

An Atlas of the U.S.A.—by J. H. Stemberger. Price 6 d.

This pamphlet by a well-known author contains a description of the country, the customs and manners of the people of the U.S.A. and their political and economic struggles. The pamphlet makes use of the map as the main device and the attempt, therefore, is very successful. The maps have explanatory notes to render them understandable and useful.

An Atlas of India—by A. M. Lorenzo—Price Annas 8.

Brief but complete in itself, starting with the environmental setting of India and finishing with geopolitics and sociology, this small pamphlet is well-illustrated with twenty-two maps and pictorial representations of vital statistics. The size and scope of the pamphlet have perhaps precluded the author from giving possible solutions to problems which have been merely stated, like the readjustment of living space between the States and the British Indian Provinces, etc. The country must come to its own before it can introduce large scale and small scale industries to reduce the pressure on land, to raise the average income and to eradicate the many ills, social, economic and political that the country suffers from.

It is a useful and informing publication.

The British Pacific Islands—by Sir Harry Luke. Price 6 d.

This pamphlet is on the Islands which have now assumed world-wide importance as air bases. The author, in the chapters on the native races and the impact of the white man, has been sympathetic and fair to all and the concerned. The style and the presentation of the matter make the booklet pleasant reading.

H. R. R.

KANNADA

Bettada Jeeva—by Sri Sivaram Karant—59-60 Manohara Granthamala, Dharwar. Price 1—14—0.

This is a story of a tough Malnad Life. The hero reminds one of Wordsworth's Michael, and lives in a lonely and far-off hamlet hidden beneath the impenetrable woods of Malnad. He abounds in profound commonsense, is imbued with a strong sense of humour and inspired by a spirit of heroic action. A restless and untiring worker, he is not beaten by disappointments. He is highly cultured, though not, perhaps, educated in the usual sense. Being in touch with the currents of modern life, he has sent his son for higher English education. But unfortunately, by force of circumstances, his son falls under the evil influence of urban companions, altogether forgets his parents and is practically lost them. This desertion casts a gloom on their daily life. The hero bears heroically this filial ingratitude, but his wife pines away slowly under the pain.

All this is narrated by a stranger-visitor to the spot whose identity is not revealed at all. He experiences the cordial hospitality of his generous host. He seems to be an aimless traveller delicately bred up in town. This character is not vividly portrayed; and is perhaps not meant to be a sprightly one.

There are other minor characters depicted in a lively manner. Here and there we find flashes of vivifying description of nature in all her grandeur.

The language is simple and elegant. One may complain that the humour is sometimes too deliberate; also that there is also a wearying sameness in situations with patches of monotony in conversations, though happily they are far between. The last chapter however is arresting and interesting.

The author wields a pen that can portray a charming picture of graceful life as well as an awful environ surrounding it. H. N. K.

'Jahanara'—by Sri S. V. Parameswara Bhatta, Kannada Lecturer, Intermediate College, Tumkur. Publishers: Panduranga Press, Tumkur.

'Jahanara' is a long narrative poem, of which Jahanara, Shah Jahan's daughter, is the heroine. She has been in prison as a result of her having taken sides with Dara, her eldest brother, against Aurangzeb. In the solitude of her prison she looks back on her past life so full of sad events. She was in love with a Rajput who gallantly fought on the side of the rightful heir and died a hero's death in one of the engagements. There seemed no end to her misery and wretched loneliness.

The heroine is portrayed almost as a 'Hindu Sati' in spite of her Muslim birth and breeding. Justification of this may be sought in the fact that she loved a Rajput.

The smooth flow of the narrative has suffered to some extent by the pensive mood overhanging it. The lines are occasionally laden with heavy Sanskrit compounds and there are quaint old Kannada terminations tacked on to new Kannada forms. We welcome this promising effort, and trust the gifted author will give us more of such historical narratives.

H. N. K.

TAMIL

Puyal—By Rabindranath Tagore. Translated into Tamil by T. N. Kumaraswami, B.A., Alliance & Co., Publishers, Mylapore, Price Rs. 6/-.

Tagore as a writer ranks equal with the best in world's literature. Perhaps no other can claim to be as versatile and great as he is in the employment of all kinds of literary forms for expression such as song, drama, dialogue, essay, novel and short story. Before the many Indian languages could absorb Tagore in full English and some of the other European tongues were translating him. No doubt the poet's mind and art cannot be at their highest in a translated version, however ably done. Much less can they show off in the garb of English, which, according to some critics, is even less fitted than the other European languages to bring out the beauties of the oriental mind.

Any day translations by one from another of the Indian languages should have a better appeal to Indian readers because of the fundamental unity of culture and tradition underlying all diversities on the surface. May be the rhythm of words and the elusive form in the original Bengali are not transmitted in such renderings. But certainly much that is imperishable in thought will not be lost. Hence our peculiar pleasure in welcoming works of Rabindranath in Tamil, which has gained numerous votaries from English-educated intellectuals in an amazingly short time.

Sri Kumaraswami's ability for the task of rendering Tagore into Tamil cannot be questioned. He is a student of Bengali literature and has a distinct advantage over others thereby. Again, his Tamil possesses much flexibility and resonance, so well-equipped for the purpose of retaining Tagore's rich imagery and metaphors.

The story of 'Wreck' is so well-known to Indian readers as a high-class social novel that it needs no special inducement to be read. But to those who have not the benefit of knowing it in the Bengali, a translation of it in Tamil from the Bengali directly provides the next best satisfaction. A strange fear lurks in some quarters that translation stifles originality in the first instance. Again, it tends to develop an inferiority complex in one's own efforts. True, such speculations may be useful, though this much can be always said that any day the attempt at translations of Indian authors of repute is a far more wholesome endeavour than rendering Russian and French authors into our languages. Whether belonging to Bengal, Maharashtra or Tamil Nad, writers in this country partake much of our own surroundings, and the same heart and pulse-beat quicken them to unfold themselves. Do we not need, then, more such beacon-lights as Tagore to shed a permanent glow on our path for the supreme end of being Indians first, and Indians last?

Lastly, a word of hearty congratulation on the admirable way the publishers have chosen to give us this book with its neat get-up and clear print.

K. C.

The TRIVENI Quarterly

Kalki Deepavali Malar, 1943—Kilpauk Madras. Demy 4 Vo-Pages 320.

This Deepavali Number published by 'Kalki,' the popular Tamil Journal (issued thrice a month) is a sumptuous production containing interesting and varied literary fare and numerous illustrations, including historical ones, and cartoons. There are stories by Rajaji, Suddhananda Bharati, K. Santanam, K. Savitri Ammal, K. P. Rajagopalan, Kalki and Sukhapriya; articles and sketches by T. K. C., Krishnaswami Iyer, K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar, Ambujammal, Rao Saheb Vaiyapuri Pillai and poems by Desikavivayakem Pillai and V. Ramalinga Pillai.

There are numerous portraits—those of Gendhiji and Kasturi Bai being noteworthy—and cartoons by Shankar, Sharma and others. The coloured and silhouette pictures of Kanu Desai lend distinction to the Annual. True to its traditions, the Annual reproduces portraits of contemporary musicians, actors etc., seeking to bring them to public notice. The numerous advertisements add colour and quality to a publication which must be considered a triumph in these days of paper scarcity. The publishers deserve hearty congratulations.

K.

MALAYALAM

The Perumpatappu Svarupam Grandhavari—Book I—Record in Oriental Languages—Cochin State. Published by V. K. R. Menon, Cochin Government Press, Ernakulam.

The manuscript published takes up only sixteen pages of printed matter. But the publication contains an elaborate critical English Introduction and a Malayalam translation of it as well as many appendices. The publication is the first of the series undertaken in pursuance of the request of the Indian Historical Records Commission. The manuscript belongs to the 18th century according to Mr. M. Sankara Menon who first brought it to light and translated it into English, and purports to give a summary of the history of the Royal family of Cochin from the earliest times up to the conquest of British Malabar by Hyder Ali. A complete provisional chronology of the Cochin Rajas had already been published in 1863 A. D. by Dr. F. Day in the *The Land of the Perumals* on the basis of a single manuscript supplied by the then Dewan, Mr. Sankunny Menon. Access to fresh material from Portuguese sources led Messrs. K. P. Padmanabha Menon and C. Achyuta Menon to correct the dates given by Mr. Day. Both chronologies are given in the introduction facilitating comparative study. This chronology is again compared with that given by *Tenkailanathodayam* of Neelakanta, which belongs to the sixteenth century. A new manuscript called *Patappattu*, a war-ballad discovered in 1924, helped Ulloor to correct the chronology still further. A translation of a memoir written by Henrieck Van Rheege, a Dutch Commander, describing the events leading up to the capture of the Cochin Fort is given together with the chronology corrected in the light of the new material. The present publication is interesting to the linguist also as showing the progress the Malayalam language has made within the last two centuries in matters of diction and construction. We dare say that the archives of the Cochin Government contain many more historical records which deal not only with the destinies of the Royal Family, but would throw light on the culture and progress of the people of the State, and we hope the Government would spare no efforts to unearth them and make them available to scholars.

T.



Sri Nandalal Bose on Art

In the PRABUDDHA BHARATA (Dec. 1943) Swami Prabuddhananda reports a conversation he had with Sri Nandalal Bose on Art. The following are extracts from the replies given by the great artist :

Art is imagination. It is feeling expressed in line, form and colour. Art must evoke feeling, otherwise its value is nothing

The aim of art is creation, and not imitation of Nature. The same creative impulse that moves in Nature, impels and inspires the artist. And it is this inspiration which the hand of the artist paints to the senses. Art is thought. To be communicable, thought must take concrete form.....

In any work of art, life-movement is that movement which is impelled by the very first impulse of inspiration, which carries in it the intrinsic quality and character of the particular *rasa* that has to be expressed. In a picture it is the most vital line; in a poem it is the inevitable word or combination of words. It is there that one feels the very pulse or life-throb of a picture or a poem. It, at once, renders unity and character to the work in hand.

Rhythm is a further elaboration of that life-movement; it combines other elements, motifs, units; it catches up the original movement and adds to that a continuous swing; continues it in a perfect harmony of contrasting as well as corollary movements

Perspective is the artist's apparent relation with the objects seen at a distance. Things, when looked at from a distance, appear smaller than their actual size. This is a phenomenon which an artist has got to take note of. Omission of this knowledge in any work of art means violation of the law of perspective. But what is the truth in perspective? The mind sees things in a way peculiar to itself. An object which is distant to the physical eye may be near to the mind; a near one, distant. The mind often ignores the category of space. There are, therefore, two kinds of perspectives, namely, visual and mental. Following the mind, the oriental artists, not infrequently, omit visual perspective in their works of art. So, some Western critics find fault with them. But they do not realize how much mind contributes to art. It is mind not eye which is the real artist.

China excels in landscape of a kind which expresses spiritual realisation and spiritual experience in the artist through conventional and symbolical forms of Nature. Realistic portrait-painting has reached its high-watermark of excellence in Europe. India has excelled in the expression of spiritual realization through conventional and symbolical drawings of animals and human figures

You have to look at them (works of art) with the eyes of a child. You should not approach them with preconceived ideas, or the analytical eye of a mere critic. Art is not to be appreciated in that way.

Shaw Retires

The following are extracts from 'S' who writes in the INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER (4-12-1943) on "G B S looks Back":

George Bernard Shaw has given Hannen Swaffer what is described as a "farewell interview."

It is strange that Shaw, who prides himself on his essential common-sense, should have slipped so badly as to fall a prey to the human weakness of seeking a striking exit and then, too, talk of "awaiting his turn with serenity."

The message itself is painful reading. It is doubly so when it comes in the evening of his days from one who has so indubitably left his mark on the many facets of British life. Shaw has been a force for progress, however feeble he may feel it was. And it is not helpful to progress when one, who was essentially a fighter, tells the world that the fight has been all in vain.

What is tragic is Shaw's loss of faith in his own work. At a younger age it would not have mattered very much, this loss of faith; for then one can cease from persisting in futility. But it is a pretty desperate state to reach when one "is awaiting one's turn in serenity." "This is the way the world ends—not with a bang but a whimper."

The age we live in has produced men who have both style and thought. Prominent among them are Havelock Ellis and Bernard Shaw. But Shaw's brilliance was his bane. The world at large distrusts brilliance. Lesser men console themselves for the lack of it by equating it with instability and, when it is accompanied by a sense of humour, with irresponsibility. Most men can reconcile themselves to a new idea if it is not clumsily presented. All of them can enjoy good writing if there is no thought within it.

The influence of Shaw on the times is difficult to gauge. It is impossible to say of any one man that he changed the ideas of his period, except in obituary notices. But of Shaw one thing is certain; that many of the things which were shocking when he first uttered them, are now become current coin. Some of them have even become out-of-date. The reason why Shaw is taken more seriously now is that the paradox of yesterday has ceased to dazzle, has almost ceased to be a paradox. The medium of the stage and the number of plays put out by Shaw both enabled the public to grow familiar with his style. And humour was the element which caught and held public attention. It is a moot point whether the humourist achieves anything beyond amusing his hearers and readers. There are many who hold that to get people to laugh at their own foibles is the best way to restore them to normality. On the other hand, the man who starts getting people to laugh with him at their follies, often ends by being always laughed at himself. The man who would set his mark on the world, must be capable of rousing people to an emotion less balanced than laughter. Humour is, after all, a sense of proportion. Shaw himself has said this often. When one sees things clearly, one is apt to refrain from action, because one has lost that singleness of purpose which inspires all action.

